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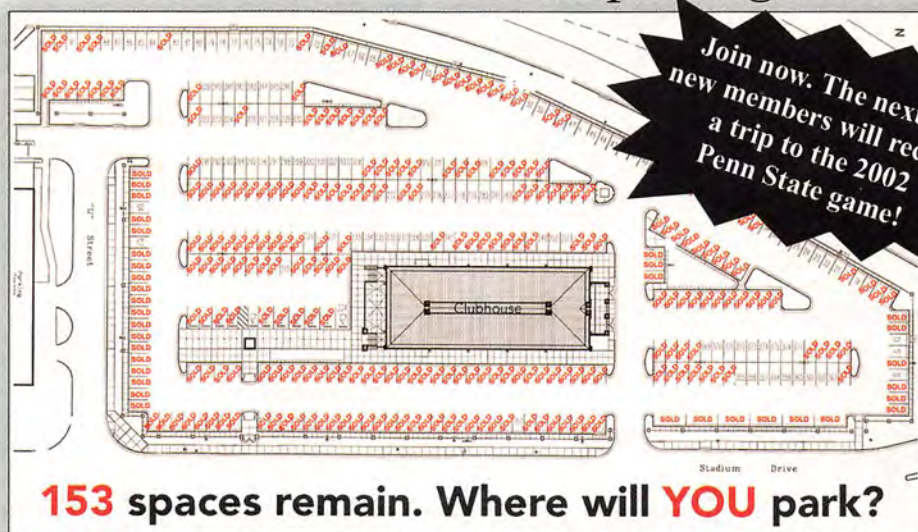
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Too Soon To Tell

*Many positive signs
in season-opening victory*



Brian Hill

IT'S GOING TO take a while.

A 48-10 season-opening victory is impressive in itself, and there were a lot of positive signs. But it's going to take a while to get a true read on the 2002 Huskers.

The first real tests will be back-to-back road games against Penn State (Sept. 14) and Iowa State (Sept. 28).

Yes, Iowa State. The Cyclones showed they will be tough to handle by rallying from a 24-0 deficit and throwing a big scare into No. 3 Florida State before falling 38-31 in the Eddie Robinson Classic in Kansas City. And despite the fact that Penn State finished 5-6 last season, newly expanded Beaver Stadium (it now seats more than 106,000) is always a tough place to play.

The key for the young Huskers will be to improve each week and continue the fine special teams play. That had to be a highlight of the opener, as Nebraska blocked two punts, one resulting in a touchdown and the second setting up a touchdown. The Huskers blocked just two punts all last season.

Jammal Lord, in his first start, showed an uncanny ability to make tacklers miss. But he did get hit and hit hard, which had to be a change from spring and fall practices, when he wore a green jersey to protect him. The talented junior rushed for 103 yards. He completed his first two passes but went just 3-11 the rest of the game and finished with 33

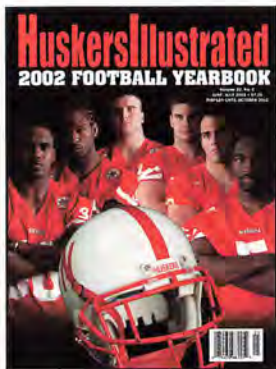
yards through the air.

"It was a win, and so that counts," Lord said. "I played OK, but you can always get better."

Lord did get the first touchdown pass of his career, a 9-yarder to a wide-open split end Wilson Thomas to put Nebraska up 17-3 early in the third quarter.

Thomas was one of six Huskers who scored touchdowns, including redshirt freshman Cory Ross on a 34-yard run with 2:10 remaining and true freshman Fabian Washington on a 29-yard interception return 15 seconds later.

You can read much, much more about the earliest opening game in school history in this edition of *Huskers Illustrated*.



In our feature story, contributing editor Mike Babcock takes a look at Nebraska's system of rotating tight ends. We begin a series on the Husker assistants with a look at defensive line coach Jeff Jamrog, the newest member of Frank Solich's staff. The subject of this week's player profile is sophomore guard Mike

Erickson, one of seven players who made their first start against Arizona State.

With Lord and the others getting their baptism under fire, one stat stood out. The Huskers had no turnovers.

The officiating crew, however, apparently did have a bobble.

Arizona State received an extra chance to get on the scoreboard in the final minutes. Three incompletions and a rush for no gain (documented in the play-by-play) should have resulted in a change of possession with 1:03 remaining, but the Sun Devils were allowed to line up for a "fifth" down play at the Nebraska 14.

This time, the pass was complete, but for only 1 yard, and the Huskers ran out the final 52 seconds.

Oh well. It's early. ■

ON THE COVER

Patrick Kabongo (top) and Justin Smith combine to sack Arizona State quarterback Andrew Walter, who fumbled on the play. The Sun Devils recovered but lost 17 yards on the play. Photo by Scott Bruhn

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Although blocking is a key part of the Nebraska tight end's role, the ideal tight end also would excel at catching the football. *By Mike Babcock*



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Some advice from Tom Osborne helped form the foundation for Jeff Jamrog's coaching philosophy. The former Nebraska walk-on (above left) is in his third year as defensive line coach. *By Mike Babcock*

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NEXT ISSUE

The review of the Troy State game will be mailed Tuesday, Sept. 3 because of the Labor Day holiday.

'Not Rah-Rah Guys'

DeJuan Groce was unchanged by the honor bestowed by his teammates a week before the Arizona State game. He was elected captain, along with Chris Kelsay and John Garrison.

But "captain, that's just a title," said Groce. "I'm just DeJuan, the same old DeJuan."

Groce, who's from Garfield Heights, Ohio, is only the second Nebraska football captain from Ohio since 1965, when Coach Frank Solich earned that honor under Coach Bob Devaney.

L.C. Cole, a defensive end from Dayton, was a co-captain in 1979.

Groce said the leadership role "kind of flipped on (to) me once Keyuo (Craver) left."

Craver, also a cornerback, was a co-captain last season.

Kelsay's brother Chad was a co-captain on Solich's first team in 1998. "I saw some of the leadership skills he portrayed," said Chris, like his brother a rush end. "I tried to follow in his footsteps."

The Kelsays, who are from Auburn, Neb., are the fifth brother combination to be Cornhusker football captains, following Mike (1983) and Andy Keeler (1988), Erik (1991) and Zach Wiegert (1994), Christian (1995) and Jason Peter (1997) and Grant (1997) and Tracey Wistrom (2001).

"It means an awful lot," Chris Kelsay said. "You grow up here in Nebraska and you want to play for the Huskers. You finally get the opportunity and then five years later, you're elected captain."

"It's something I really worked on hard the last couple of years, showing my leadership skills and really following them up with my actions. It's one thing to talk as a leader. It's another thing to show you're a leader through your actions. I've tried to use them both."

"I try to talk the talk and walk the walk at the same time. I think the two go hand-in-hand, and if you use them right, you can be a team leader. I feel comfortable as a leader on this team."

Garrison seemed comfortable with his new role, although "I'm not much of a motivational speaker or anything like that," he said. "I'm not much for fancy words, as you guys probably know."

He was referring to a handful of



Nebraska's 2002 captains, pictured with Coach Frank Solich, are rush end Chris Kelsay (57), cornerback DeJuan Groce (5) and center John Garrison (52).

reporters interviewing him about being elected captain. He is "kind of cut and dried," Garrison said. "I don't sell too many papers for you guys."

His teammates "know I'm going to give it everything I've got," said Garrison, who graduated high school in Blue Springs, Mo., but spent the first 12 years of his life in West Virginia.

That makes him a "backwoods hill-billy," he said with a smile.

Garrison agreed with Kelsay that the best way to lead is by example.

"I would say all three, to a degree, are quiet young men," said Solich. "You don't see them doing a lot of raising their voices on the practice field, but they're constantly visiting with teammates on the field, encouraging them and also helping them with assignments."

"But they're not rah-rah guys that like to stand up and give speeches."

Three captains are the fewest since 1987. The Cornhuskers had five captains last season, as well as in 1995 and 1998, with an all-time high of six in 2000. From 1962, when Devaney arrived as head coach, through 1982, they had only two captains each season, one on offense and one on defense.

Why only three? "I don't know," Groce said. "That's just the way it turned out."

Garrison, a center, represents the offense, while Groce and Kelsay represent the defense. But "DeJuan, in my mind, is a special-teams captain, too," said Solich.

"He had such a great year last year as a special-teams player, not only on the punt returns he had but also he did an outstanding job of (being the) 'bullet' on the coverage team."

Groce ranked third in the Big 12 and ninth nationally in punt returns last season, averaging 14.2 yards per return, the third-best, single-season average in Cornhusker history.

Even though they have the captain's title, "we've got great leaders," Garrison said. "I thought there were a lot of guys that could lead this team, Wes Cody, Dahrran (Diedrick) in the backfield."

Kelsay agreed. "I just feel very fortunate," he said. "We've got a bunch of leaders on this team."

That's important, he said. "Leadership is definitely going to have to play a big role."

Groce was eager to accept his captain's responsibilities. "It's going to be fun," he said. "I'm more laid back, but I help the younger guys, try to give them feedback."

"I never thought it would happen." ■

TESTING AGAIN

Because of a change in NCAA rules, the Nebraska varsity football team skipped preseason strength and conditioning tests the past two years. The NCAA ruling that testing counts as practice time came so late in 2000 that Coach Frank Solich decided to cancel the testing.

Last year, the Cornhuskers skipped it again.

This year, however, Solich "decided he wanted to see the test results because it brings closure to the summer conditioning period," said Boyd Epley, director of athletic performance. Also, it provides "an opportunity for the athletes to really feel good about themselves if they do well.

"It gives them such a positive feeling. It's so rewarding that Coach Solich felt it would be worthwhile to take up actual practice time to do the physical tests."

Chris Kelsay posted the highest point total in the performance index, which factors in an athlete's size with his test scores. Dahrran Diedrick and Trevor Johnson were tied for second.

The varsity players are not tested in the 40-yard dash in the fall because of the risk of hamstring pulls.

The scores:

Performance index — Kelsay 2,193 points, Diedrick and Johnson 2,070, Chad Sievers 2,060, Curt Tomasevicz 1,970

Vertical jump — Tomasevicz 37 inches, Kelsay 35.5, Jammal Lord, Shane Siegel and Diedrick 35

Vertical jump points — Tomasevicz 685, Kelsay 663, Diedrick 619

10-yard dash — Marques Simmons 1.51 seconds, Sievers 1.53, Lannie Hopkins 1.54

10-yard dash points — Kelsay and Sievers 754, Diedrick 713, Johnson and Hopkins 694

Right-left agility run — Diedrick 4.06 seconds, Kellen Huston 4.09, Aaron Terpening, Rodney Burgess and Mike McLaughlin 4.13

Right-left agility run points — Diedrick 838, Johnson 821, Jon Clanton 793
Sievers' 10-yard dash time (1.53) and 10-yard dash performance points (754) were position records, as were Hopkins' 10-yard dash performance points (694).

The freshman test results:

Performance index — Matt Herian 2,142 points, Fabian Washington 1,948, Kurt Mann 1,907

10-yard dash — Washington 1.59 seconds, Herian 1.63, David Horne and Dane Todd 1.72

10-yard dash points — Herian 571, Mann 497, Cory Timm 484

40-yard dash — Washington 4.61, Herian 4.67, Horne 4.78

40-yard dash points — Herian 675, Washington 587, Horne 491

Pro-agility run — Washington 4.31 seconds, Mark LeFlore and Andrew Shanle 4.44, Horne 4.45

Pro-agility run points — Mann 485, Washington 462, Adam Carriker 440

Vertical jump — Washington and Carriker 31.5 inches, Herian and Isaiah Fluellen 31.0, Horne 30.5

Vertical jump points — Carriker 524, Herian 500, Jay Moore 479 ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Walt Johnson might not have been familiar to most Nebraska football fans. But he made a significant contribution to the football program, outfitting Cornhusker freshmen from his "office" in Schulte Fieldhouse. Every player who came to Nebraska from 1975 to 1990 knew Walt.

Johnson, whose daughter Vicki Cartwright has worked in the Nebraska sports information office for the past 20-plus years, died of a heart attack in early August, at age 64.

He is remembered in the following tribute, written by Chuck Pool, a former Nebraska sports information office assistant — and freshman football player, as a sophomore.

"For the 15 years he was working the north stadium, Walt was the first guardian of almost every Nebraska football player. He was gruff, he was rough, he was mean and he treated everyone the same, like we were just an excuse for him to have to do laundry."

"But, of course, all of that was just his act — well, at least most of it."

"Walt loved every kid who came there to play for Nebraska. And he showed it by putting them through their paces, making sure they learned what was expected. They all got the 'treatment.' No matter if you were the blue-chipper from some far-away state who could have gone anywhere or the fading sophomore who came back out for one last try, you were all equal in Walt's eyes and vocal assault."

"I doubt there is a player from that era who does not have a Walt story or memory."

"When I walked on for freshman ball as a sophomore, I wore my old high school football shoes. I was no lock to make the team and worried that I was going to get cut. I think I might have even shared that with Walt in some way and he just said something to the effect that if I did, it was one less set of clothes he had to wash. Then one day, I come to my locker and find two pair of shoes (one turf, one grass), neither new but in better shape than what I had. My old shoes were now gone."

"I went to Walt and asked what happened to them. 'I tossed those sorry-looking things. We want our players to look good on the field.' I said something about getting cut, and he said, 'Listen you dumb SOB, if they were going to cut you, I wouldn't have wasted the time to get you the shoes.'"

"That is how I found out I had made it."

"He really made an impact and an impression. He was one of the old-time characters that don't really exist in the new world of college football. Too bad for all the newcomers."

FULL SLATE NEXT SEASON

Nebraska added San Jose State to its 2003 football schedule, increasing the number of non-conference games to four and bringing the total to 12 games, as allowed by the NCAA.

Division I-A schools can play 12 regular-season games in years when there are 14 Saturdays between the last Saturday in August and the last Saturday in November.

San Jose State will play at Memorial Stadium on Sept. 27, 2003.

Nebraska's game against Oklahoma State in Lincoln, originally scheduled for Oct. 4, has been moved to Aug. 30, giving the Cornhuskers a week off after playing their first five games.

Nebraska last opened the season against a conference opponent, also Oklahoma State, in 1995.

The Cornhuskers' lone non-conference road game next season will be at Southern Mississippi.

FOR THE RECORD

Nebraska was picked to finish second in the Big 12 north division, behind Colorado, in a vote of conference-area media representatives. First-place votes were worth six points, second-place votes five points, and so on. The Cornhuskers drew 104 points to Colorado's 121.

Oklahoma was picked first in the south division, followed by Texas. Sports Illustrated put the Sooners No. 1 in its preseason rankings, with Nebraska at No. 14.

Sports Illustrated picked Nebraska's game at Penn State on Sept. 14 as one of the season's top 10 match-ups. The "Cornhuskers will leave fans in Happy Valley with little cheer," it said.

Rush end Chris Kelsay and I-back Dahrran Diedrick were Nebraska's only representatives on the conference media's preseason All-Big 12 first team. ■

'He Really Didn't Get A Chance'

Defensive lineman's determined comeback ends with another serious knee injury



**Mike
BABCOCK**

JASON LOHR HURLED HIS HELMET a good 15 yards in frustration, as he lay prone on the Memorial Stadium FieldTurf during Nebraska's final major scrimmage at the end of two-days.

He had planted his foot while fighting off a blocker and suffered a tear of the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, a fact confirmed by an MRI later that day.

"I'm sure once he heard the leg pop, he knew," teammate Jon Clanton said.

Clanton, like Lohr, is a defensive tackle and the two have established a friendship during their time at Nebraska. They came in together as members of Coach Frank Solich's first recruiting class in 1998. And they were going out together, after Lohr was granted a medical hardship last season.

Lohr suffered a tear of the lateral collateral ligament in the left knee in last season's Notre Dame game and spent the better part of a year rehabilitating the knee following surgery.

When two-a-days began in early August, he wasn't sure how the knee would hold up. But "once I got out there, I felt pretty good," he said midway through the preseason practices.

He was bigger than he had ever been, at 290 pounds, and stronger, a testament to his dedication in the weight room. He also was the quickest he had ever been, as videotape showed.

"I wasn't sure how he was going to hold up," said Clanton. "But he held up fine."

Lohr didn't know how he would hold up, either.

"Early in the summer, I wasn't sure," he said. "I was just going to come into two-a-days and see how it went. And it went pretty well. So I feel good, knock on wood."

Less than a week later, he was walking on crutches, with the prospect of more surgery.

Teammates and coaches did what they could, but there was little they could say to offset the frustration and disappointment. Rush end Chris Kelsay found him in the training room after the scrimmage, "gave him a hug and told him to keep his head up. Things happen for a reason," Kelsay said.

But reasons are difficult to identify in such situations.

"It upset me a lot," said Clanton. "I went through all last year with Jason. It was like the whole year, him getting back. (Then) all of a sudden he gets hurt. A guy trains that hard, it gets me down."

Clanton said Lohr's injury affected him for the remain-

der of the scrimmage.

"He really didn't get a chance," Clanton said.

The next morning, as the team prepared for Photo Day, Jeff Jamrog, Lohr's position coach, tried to articulate how the team felt. "You just hate to see guys get hurt that pay such a tremendous price to come back," he said. Lohr was "moving around as well as he has since I've been here."

"And then to get that kind of injury is so unfortunate. I feel bad for him."

From a practical standpoint, "the biggest thing that hurts is just experience," said Jamrog. "He was very strong against the run, so that's something that obviously you'll miss."

"He was a great leader, a quiet leader. He's just a guy you can count on."

That was dramatically illustrated two seasons ago in a 34-32 victory against Colorado. Lohr seemed to be wherever a Buffalo with the ball was. He was credited with 11 tackles that day.

Clanton stepped in for Lohr as the starter last season, and he'll help plug the hole again. But it won't be the quite the same without someone with Lohr's experience in the rotation.

That Lohr played as a true freshman enabled him to get the medical hardship for a fifth season. So since he hasn't used a redshirt, he could petition for a sixth season now.

A handful of Cornhuskers have been successful with such petitions, including wide receiver John Gibson, offensive tackle Jason Schwab and punter Dan Hadenfeldt.

Lohr's situation would seem to be a slam-dunk. But he was hesitant to petition for the medical hardship. After the injury and the surgery, "I was kind of like, 'If I get another year, do I want to come back?'" he said in May. "I was pretty sure I'd get it, but I was like, 'I don't know.'"

"I had just had back surgery and then I had that (the knee injury). After I started getting better, my attitude changed. But yeah, that was a low point, I guess."

It was much too early to speculate on whether Lohr would pursue another season, Coach Frank Solich said on the day the second knee injury occurred. "This is frustrating as it gets," he said. "To get himself in great shape, then have this happen a week before our first game is really tough for him."

Lohr might have been more emotional about last year's injury, according to Clanton.

"This year, it was more like, 'It happened again,'" Clanton said. ■



Nose tackle Jason Lohr started the first three games last season.

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AHMAN GREEN

Dream Job

Nebraska native thrilled to be new voice of the Cornhuskers



Terry DOUGLASS

OUTSIDE OF HEAD COACH and starting quarterback, there may not be a job linked to the Nebraska football program more high profile — and more scrutinized — than that of the Cornhuskers' radio play-by-play announcer.

While admitting that he's landed his dream job, Jim Rose also realizes that being the voice of Nebraska football isn't for the thin-skinned. Just ask two of Rose's predecessors, Warren Swain and Kent Pavelka, who both had their share of extremely vocal critics.

"If you've been around it long enough, you know that this is a really intensely observed and followed program and the radio guy is a pretty important part of that because he reaches so many people," Rose said. "You know that going in, and you recognize that you're not going to have a consensus."

"There will be people out there who simply won't like you. It's the 20 percent rule. Tom Osborne told me once that 20 percent is probably the area you're never going to crack."

While knowing that he can't please everyone, Rose remains confident. He has been in the business long enough to know that it's usually the critics who speak the loudest.

"I don't think too many people are going to call up the stations and say, 'Thank you for bringing Jim Rose back,'" Rose said. "But the people who don't like it are going to call up, and they're going to write letters, so it's going to seem like there's a lot more (critics) than there really may be. It's part of the deal."

Still, Rose thinks he and the rest of the Pinnacle Sports Radio Network team are capable of putting together a product most fans will enjoy throughout the season. Veteran color man Adrian Fiala joins Rose in the booth, while Gary Sharp delivers sideline reports, and former Husker Terry Connealy has returned for a second season.

"I'm surrounded by really good people — people that I have great affection for on the air: the coaching staff, the support staff, the advertisers that we bring and radio stations that we bring," Rose said. "I think if I goof this one up, it's probably going to be my fault alone. I don't think I can pass the blame."

One major advantage Rose should have over an outsider is his familiarity with the state and its beloved football program. A lifelong follower of his alma mater, Rose brings a vast knowledge of Husker history to the booth.

"If I was brand new to the area and didn't really have any connection to the university . . . I think I'd be a lot more concerned," said Rose, who spent two football seasons away from Nebraska while hosting a radio sports talk show in Kansas City. "It was like I wasn't really gone."

Rose possesses a distinct voice that Husker fans have gotten to know over the years. The former Nebraska

sportscaster of the year was part of football pregame shows for several seasons and also hosted the "Sports Nightly" program for Pinnacle that's now hosted by Sharp.

Most would describe Rose as a bit of a throwback — a craftsman of words who might remind listeners of Nebraska football broadcasts from the days of old. Rose said former Husker play-by-play man Tim Moreland, who called games in the 1970s and early 1980s, had the most profound effect on him.

"He just had such a captivating style — a wonderful command of the language," Rose said. "He was a showman on the air. He was a tune-in guy. You just couldn't stop listening."

Rose has worked hard to develop his own style, which he says continues to evolve.

"Over the years, I think you learn some things about what sounds good," Rose said. "There's a sense of timing that you develop during the course of the game."

"You have to know when it's most appropriate to try and capture the emotion of the moment without trampling on it. You have to know when it's appropriate to say nothing. Those are things that I think that only experience teaches you. You can't watch it. You have to do it."

Rose said the tone of his broadcasts should leave no doubt which team he's pulling for. When people tune in, there's no question they're going to hear "a Nebraska guy," Rose said.

Fiala, who earned academic All-America honors playing for both the Nebraska football and baseball teams from 1967-69, is back for his seventh season at Pinnacle and his 14th year overall as a Husker football broadcaster. Fiala is confident that he and Rose will have excellent chemistry.

"We've had nine or 10 years of experience working together, and we've done a lot of Nebraska baseball together, so we know each other very well," Fiala said. "We know each other's style and tendencies, so I think the chemistry is going to be real good."

Rose, who wrote a book called "Not the Game, But the Glory: a Century of Nebraska Football," admits that he's about to take over his dream job — even though it's a position he never imagined he'd have. Nevertheless, he's humbled to just be able to be a part of Husker football.

"This is my contribution. This is how I can be a part of it," Rose said. "If you want to be a part of something bad enough, sometimes you search your whole life to do it. I'm lucky enough to have this chance this early in my life."

"It's going to be a real exciting and exhilarating kind of experience. Hopefully, it's something I'll do well enough to hang around for a while." ■



Jim Rose is NU's new radio play-by-play announcer.

Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbbdouglass@netzero.net.

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Different Motivation

Husker coaches make sure to concentrate on positives



Curt McKEEVER

WHEN IT COMES TO BUILDING team unity and confidence, it's hard to beat the mood-altering magic of a highlight tape.

But for all the egos and abilities that often need caressing and built up, sometimes a good ol' kick in the pants can produce the same kind of motivation and incentive.

Recently, Tennessee linebacker Eddie Moore told *Sports Illustrated* that he watched the game tape of the Volunteers' 31-20 loss to Louisiana State in last year's SEC championship. And not just once, but hundreds of times, because he wanted to hold on to the feeling of discomfort it gave him.

"We've got to work two or three times harder and keep that game in mind," Moore said.

Might Nebraska benefit from taking a similar approach over its losses to Colorado and Miami at the end of last year?

Yes and no.

Husker coaches aren't blind to the fact that a lot of things went wrong in those games. But they also make sure they concentrate on the positives.

"We make sure our players understand what they did good and what they did not do so good," NU Coach Frank Solich said. "But (we) don't really put together a (lowlights film). The morale factor can go South on you."

Nebraska players are subjected to daily viewing of practice film. In the preseason, they know more emphasis will be placed on what comes from scrimmages.

"You come off a scrimmage, and everybody's 'How'd you do?' " said redshirt freshman offensive tackle Richie Incognito. It's always, " 'Good. Good Good.' "

"You get in that film room, and everything changes. You've got people ducking their heads. You always hear, 'Oh, man.' Tape always catches everything."

Like many, Incognito tries to focus on what's gone right, "because everybody's going to make a couple of mistakes."

Even Solich.

"I think everybody in this profession, whether you're a player or a coach, needs to get critiqued and critique himself. That's what it's all about in improving," NU's fifth-year coach said. "But you can beat yourself up so badly that you lose confidence — and once you've lost confidence, it becomes a negative for everybody, so there's a fine line there between making sure they understand how much they've got to improve."

"There is a bottom line to that, in that if they don't understand, you're in big trouble. But there's ways of doing it to make sure that the attitude and the effort remains consistent."

Solich can tolerate when things don't go right for the Huskers, as long as their effort shows up. When it doesn't, "we'll be very critical," he said.

At Nebraska those situations are rare.

For starters, NU has an abundance of athletic talent. Combine that with players who have come to expect to win, and you've got a recipe for success.

"The best motivation, of course, is internally, said sophomore free safety/rover Philip Bland. "But the best motivation I personally get when I'm out there is when you see other people busting their butt. You basically see it as someone you can go to war with, and if you can go to war with the other 10 players that are out there, you're going to have a helluva (team)."

Bland doesn't ignore the past, though, and says the memory of how last season ended gives the Huskers "enough motivation for the entire season."

"We have so many people around the country that are doubting us. Of course, that is motivation. We have a lot to prove, and that's something that keeps us going."

Highlight tapes don't hurt, either. But Bland prefers to let the present moment give him the best psych-up.

"It's great. You'll be getting ready to make a play, and you see someone come up flying and make a big play and get up and get excited about it," he said. "That's great motivation."

"The other motivation is just thinking about players that have been here and what this (program) has accomplished. In a way, if you don't perform, you're kind of letting them down, too."

Incognito tends to climb into a shell when on the football field.

"It's kind of hard to get everybody motivated at once," he said. "They've got psych-up tapes and that, but you've just got to go into your own world. I try and not get too hyped up, because I use too much energy jumping around."

Incognito, who's from Glendale, Ariz., then remembered how his high school coach told him he'd never play Division I college football.

"I remember (Arizona State), after I committed here, telling me I wasn't explosive enough. That (ticked) me off," he said. "That's just the stuff the motivates me, just little stuff like that."

If Nebraska's coaches find that out, that information just might find its way to Incognito's next highlight tape. ■



Freshman tackle Richie Incognito tries to focus on what's gone right.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

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Tight End

Players need at least one of two skills essential to the position

By Mike Babcock

When he was younger, Aaron Golliday eagerly accepted Nebraska's system of rotating tight ends. But to be honest about it, he's less enthusiastic about sharing playing time now.

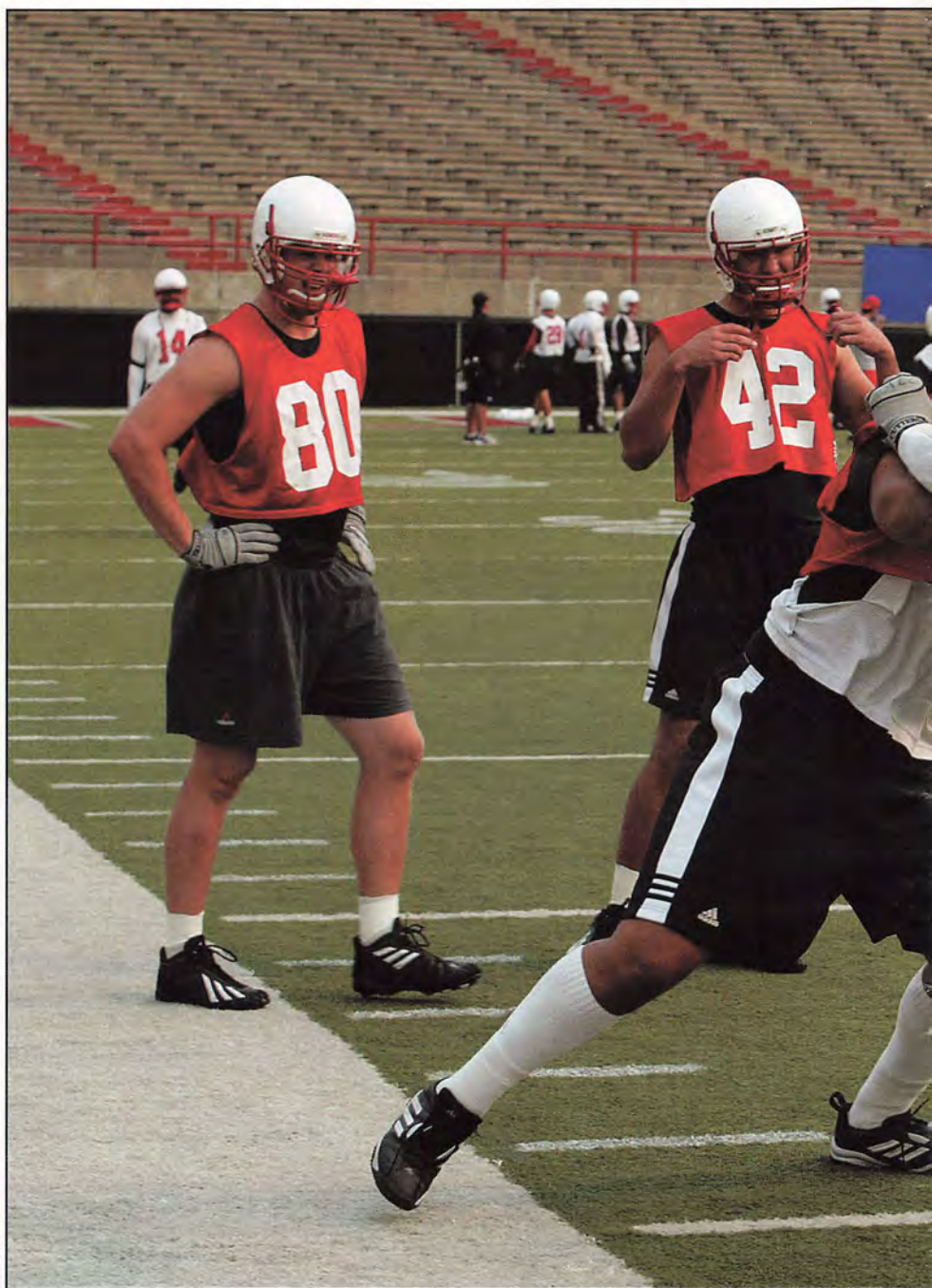
"I think it's harder when you're older," he said near the end of two-a-days. As a young player, "you're just happy to be in the game. Anything to get you in the game you'll take."

As a senior, however, "it's kind of hard because just when you think you've got something figured out, you have to come out," he said. "So you kind of re-start every time you come in."

Golliday has been part of the rotation since he was a redshirted freshman, alternating with Tracey Wistrom, T.J. DeBates and, late in the season, Jon Bowling, also a redshirted freshman.

He and Bowling rotated with Wistrom and Trevor Johnson during the 2000 season. And they rotated with Wistrom and converted rush end Kyle Ringenberg for much of last season.

With Wistrom gone, Golliday is looking to step up the way Wistrom did in 1999, following the departure of Sheldon Jackson. One tight end leaves and another moves in. "It's a



Senior tight ends Aaron Golliday and Jon Bowling (84) work on a blocking drill during a recent practice, as senior Will Dabbert (80) and freshman Matt Herian (42) await their turn.

system, basically," said Golliday. "As long as I've been here, they've just plugged tight ends in."

"We benefit from the system is what it is."

Coach Ron Brown directs the sys-

d System



tem, which rewards hard work with playing time, provided the player in question has at least one of two skills essential to the position.

A player needs to block, to "hammer," Brown said. "And you need a

guy who can catch the football, run routes and catch the ball." The ideal tight end would excel at both, of course.

"However you get to those two skills, either by using multiple play-

ers or if you have one great player who can do it all, that's what you've got to have on the field," said Brown.

Though he was light for a tight end much of his career, Wistrom could do it all last season, and was on the field as much as possible. But the Cornhuskers have run double-tight-end alignments 40- to 50-percent of the time, meaning another tight end regularly joined Wistrom on the field.

Golliday said he might have been that other tight end more often had he blocked better. So that was his focus during the preseason. "I definitely think I can be a better blocker," he said.

Blocking is at the top of Brown's list of qualities for a tight end, or a wide receiver for that matter. Why that is so should be obvious. The Cornhusker offense is heavily run-oriented.

But receiving skills are important, too. Some of Nebraska's most notable tight ends during Brown's tenure as coach have gotten on the field more for their receiving than for their blocking.

Johnny Mitchell is the best example. He didn't even get in the first game of the 1990 season, when he was a freshman. And he didn't catch a pass until the fourth game. Yet he was a first-team All-Big Eight selection, finishing with 11 receptions for 282 yards and seven touchdowns.

The seven touchdowns are tied for the most in a season by a Cornhusker tight end.

Mitchell made freshman mistakes, "but he had such great big-play ability, it was just a matter of him learning enough to get out there and make some things happen," Brown said.

Mitchell made things happen as one of three rotating tight ends in 1990. The others were William Washington and Daryl Leise, neither of whom caught a pass. Chris Garrett

started the season in the rotation but suffered a broken ankle in the fourth game — opening the way for Mitchell.

Wistrom played early on because of his receiving skills, and Jackson was more receiver than blocker, as was Eric Alford, part of a trio of tight ends on the 1994 national championship team.

Alford, a converted wingback, was a threat on deep routes and crossing routes because of his speed.

Mark Gilman didn't have exceptional speed, but he was smart, sure-handed and willing to go across the middle, as well as be an outlet receiver. And Matt Shaw was a dominating blocker.

Shaw didn't catch a pass during his Cornhusker career. But he was on the field a lot.

Brown regularly refers to the "Shaw factor" in coaching the tight ends. In simple terms, "your man doesn't make the play," said Brown. "Matt Shaw was as good as it gets in terms of his guy not making the play, just neutralizing his man. He didn't show up in the boxscore, but he was a huge factor."

Alford, Gilman and Shaw represented the rotating tight end system at its best.

"The thing we've been able to do at Nebraska is utilize skills," Brown said.

Golliday quickly learned what that meant. When he arrived in the fall of 1998, he thought of himself as a receiving tight end. But the only way he was going to play early on was to block.

"That's what they told me," he said. "So that's what I tried to do."

The problem was, "I was a real poor blocker, very poor, when I first got here."

In high school, players could give up on blocks after the ball carrier was by them, said Golliday. But "in Division I, guys still chase the football. The defense never really stops."

And defenders are so fast, "they can make tackles from anywhere," he said.

Tight ends, like offensive linemen, have to learn how to finish off their blocks.

Brown also rotates three or four tight ends because "I don't think I

can remember a year where we've made it through a season where we got through clean, without injury," he said.

In 1999, with Wistrom sidelined by a knee injury, Golliday and Bowling played important roles in the Big 12 championship game against Texas and in the Fiesta Bowl against Tennessee.

Golliday started the Fiesta Bowl game, catching two passes for 25 yards and a touchdown, the only one of his career, while Bowling caught two passes in each of those games.

Brown doesn't rotate the tight ends simply as a reward for dedication and hard work on the practice field. "You don't want to just do

favors for people," he said. "Playing time is earned."

"If a young man hits the field, it isn't out of the coach being a nice guy. There's a high level of confidence for that young man to be in the game, for the particular skill he has."

Still, motivation is inherent in such a system.

"For guys like me it gives more hope in terms of playing time," said Will Dabbert, a senior walk-on from Lincoln who began two-a-days as the fourth tight end listed on the depth chart.

"There's definitely a lot more chances to play. I appreciate that."

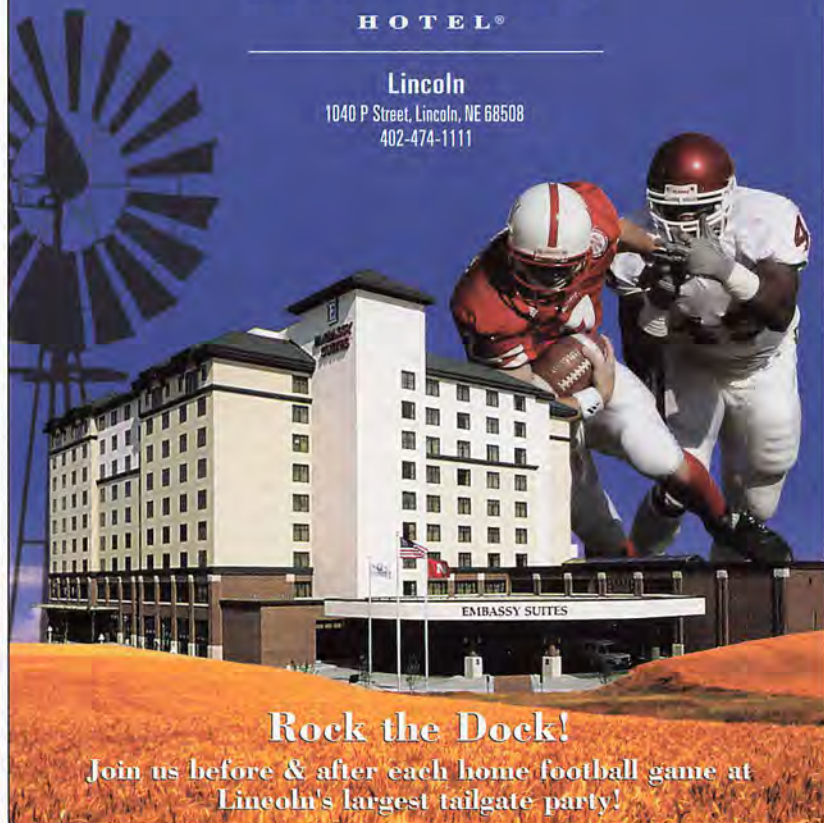
Golliday appreciated it, too . . . when he was younger. ■

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Younger Tight Ends Getting Repetitions

The top four tight ends on the preseason depth chart were seniors: Aaron Golliday, Kyle Ringenberg, Jon Bowling and Will Dabbert. But receivers coach Ron Brown isn't overly concerned.

"It's not as much of a concern in this system as it might be in another system," he said.

That's a function of the size of the squad — when everyone is allowed to report on the first day of classes — and the number of practice stations Nebraska will be able to run.

So even though they might not see much game action, if any, the lower-unit tight ends will get plenty of repetitions. "We get a ton of repetitions to our kids," said Brown.

True freshman Matt Herian is

among the tight ends of the future. Like Tracey Wistrom, the 6-foot-4 Herian needs to bulk up. He's listed at 215 pounds. But "he has great speed," Brown said. "He kind of reminds you of (Eric) Alford and (Johnny) Mitchell in terms of his speed and hands."

Because of his ability to get down the field, Herian was still a candidate to play without redshirting near the end of two-a-days practice. (That decision might well have been made by now.)

Junior Phil Peetz, a scholarship recruit who began as a defensive player, also will be in the mix, if not this season then next. He's a "tough, nasty, get-in-your-face blocker," said Brown. "So you've got a nice blend there when you combine those skills (of Herian and Peetz)."

Sophomores Chris Septak and Alex Shada will be in the picture, too. Septak, a scholarship recruit has been hampered by "numerous injuries," Brown said. "He hasn't been able to show his athletic talent. It's been one injury setback after another.

"Hopefully, he'll clear the hurdles and get on to developing that ability."

Shada, a walk-on from Wahoo, Neb., "really showed up this last spring," said Brown.

Those players figure to form the foundation for next season's tight end corps.

Even with four seniors at the top of the depth chart, "you'll find next year, somebody will step up and play pretty well, even though they haven't played a whole lot the year before," Brown said. ■

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Calmed Down

Experience in ocean dive helps Husker lineman Erickson learn to relax

Mike Erickson started to hyperventilate the first time he went scuba diving in the Atlantic Ocean. Its vastness overwhelmed him. "You're in the middle of nowhere," he said.

"I got out there and started breathing hard. I used up all my air in like 20 minutes."

He was diving with his father, Dave, off Key Largo, Fla.

And "my dad still had three-fourths of his tank left," Erickson said.

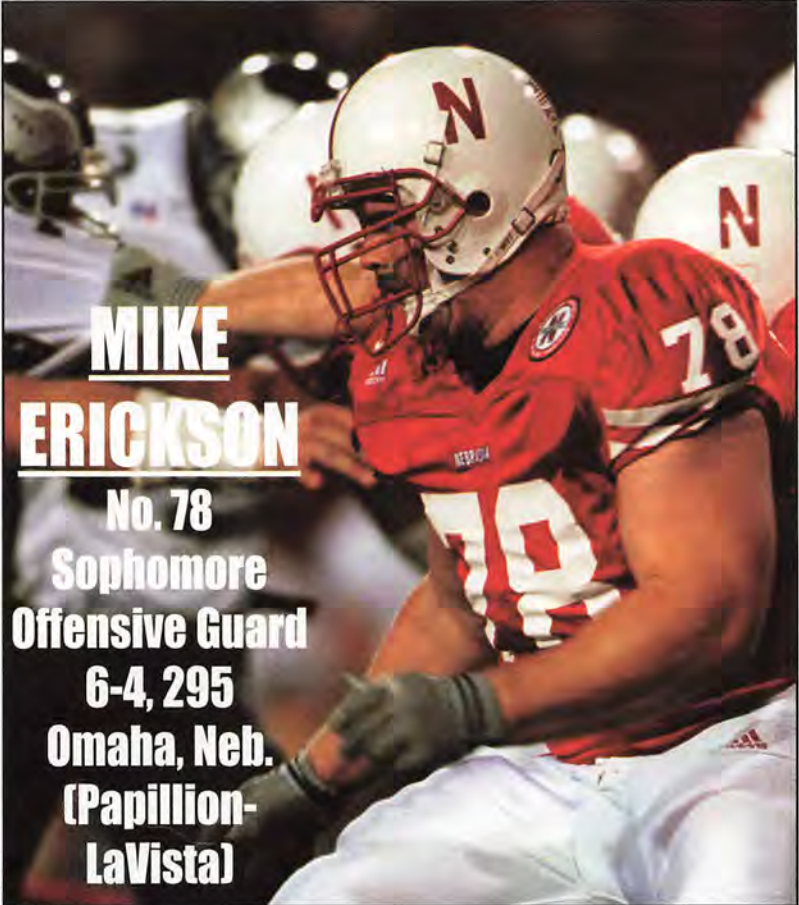
The two made a half-dozen more dives during their Florida trip, which was Erickson's high school graduation present. During one of the dives, about 80 feet down, a shark swam above him. But even the shark couldn't cause the excitement of his first dive in the ocean.

"Being out in the ocean is different," said Erickson.

Nebraska's sophomore offensive guard has been a certified open-water scuba diver since his freshman year at Papillion-LaVista, Neb., High School. But until he went to Florida, he had done his diving in swimming pools and bodies of water with clearly defined limits, lakes and ponds.

This summer, he and roommate Kellen Huston went scuba diving at Sandy Channel State Recreation Area in south central Nebraska. The water there can be "pretty murky," said Huston, a sophomore walk-on defensive back from Ankeny, Iowa. But it's good "for just podunking around."

Divers can try to locate rock sculptures, including one in the shape of a turtle, in the sandpit lake. And boats have been sunk for divers to find. One of the boats has an underwater



MIKE ERICKSON
No. 78
Sophomore
Offensive Guard
6-4, 295
Omaha, Neb.
(Papillion-LaVista)

Scott Bruhn

slate for those divers who reach it to sign. Erickson's and Huston's names are now written on that slate.

Huston made the Sandy Channel dive as part of his open-water certification, a certification that stands in testament to Erickson's passion for scuba diving. When Erickson decided to sign up for a university scuba diving class, as a refresher, he convinced Huston to sign up, too.

Huston, who plans on a career in medicine, needed some credits, so he didn't need much convincing. "I had been a swimmer in high school," he said. "And I'm comfortable in the water."

Rooming with Erickson, he had a good idea about what he was in for.

Erickson's interest in scuba diving can be traced to his father, who has "been doing it for a long time,"

Erickson said. After watching videos of his father's dives, he took a class that used the swimming pool at Ralston High School, one night a week for five weeks, two hours a night.

Earning open-water certification is "pretty easy," said Erickson, who worked on the maintenance staff at Lincoln's Heartland Scuba Center on Saturdays this past summer.

His first experience scuba diving in the ocean could be used as a metaphor for this season as he steps up to replace Toniui Fonoti at left guard in the Cornhusker offensive line. He hasn't hyperventilated under the pressure, but following Fonoti is no small task, particularly for a sophomore.

"Toniui was an exceptional player, humungous, an All-American,"

Erickson said. "So I do feel like I have something to live up to. I hope I can come out of that shadow."

Erickson was the only freshman on the top two offensive lines last season, playing in six games as well as on the extra-point and field goal teams. As is the case with most young linemen, he has had to learn what line coach Milt Tenopir calls finishing things off. "Sometimes young kids lack a little urgency," said Tenopir. "They have to understand the intensity level you have to achieve to get it done."

That level is a "matter of effort," Tenopir said.

Erickson showed that effort during the spring and continued to show it during two-a-day practices, taking

a lesson from Fonoti, whom he backed up last season.

"You've got to keep at it however hard it gets," he said. "Toni had a good mentality about getting after it and finishing stuff off, even if things maybe got a little hard, pushing on."

Erickson, a criminal justice major, spends his waking hours on football and studying. There's no time to go scuba diving now. But occasionally he pulls out a videotape of the dives on the Florida trip and watches them.

"I guess it's his get-away," said Huston.

Envisioning himself in the Atlantic Ocean, water everywhere, is relaxing now. The hyperventilation was a one-time sensation. "I calmed down after that," Erickson said. ■

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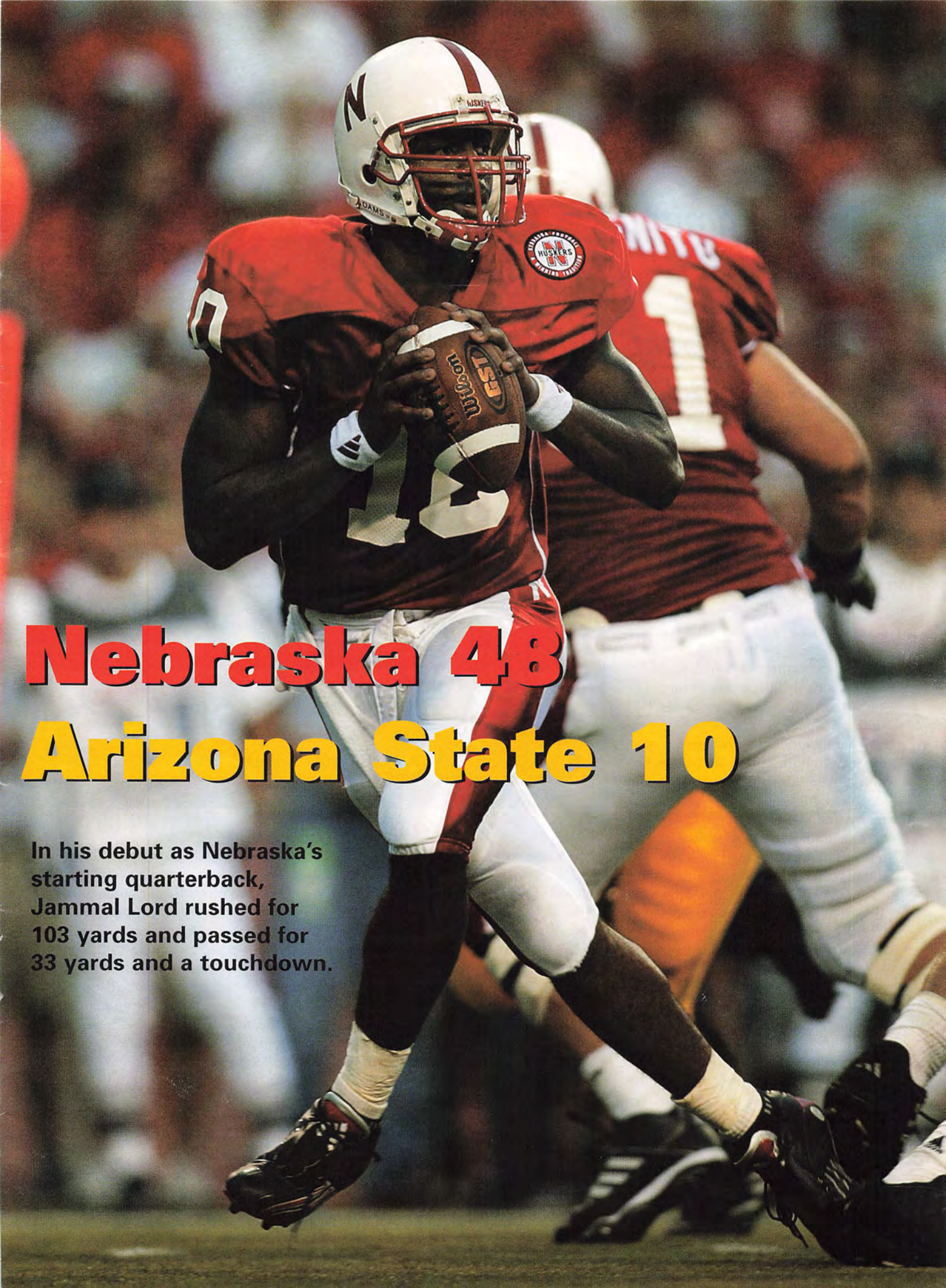
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2002 Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (school)
98	***Adams, Demoine	RRE	6-2	260	Sr.	Pine Bluff, Ark.
96	Adams, Titus	NT	6-3	290	RFr.	Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)
27	**Amos, Willie	LCB	6-0	185	Jr.	Sweetwater, Texas
71	Andersen, Jake	OG	6-1	290	So.	Littleton, Colo. (Mullen)
69	Anderson, Neil	RE	6-1	211	So.	Davenport, Neb.
61	Atha, Peter	RE	6-3	250	RFr.	Topeka, Kan.
68	Behrends, Matt	NT	6-1	260	Sr.	Chappell, Neb.
59	*Bingham, Ryon	NT	6-3	280	Jr.	Sandy, Utah (Alta)
38	Biodrowski, Brandn	SE	5-10	185	RFr.	Fort Calhoun, Neb.
16	Biodrowski, Cole	LCB	5-11	175	RFr.	Fort Calhoun, Neb.
21	*Bland, Philip	FS	5-11	205	So.	Lafayette, Colo.
84	***Bowling, Jon	TE	6-3	235	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
26	***Brown, Josh	PK	6-2	190	Sr.	Foyil, Okla.
39	Buller, Chad	WLB	5-11	215	Jr.	Henderson, Neb. (Heartland)
14	Bullocks, Daniel	ROV	6-1	200	RFr.	Chattanooga, Tenn. (Hixson)
20	Bullocks, Josh	FS	6-1	200	RFr.	Chattanooga, Tenn. (Hixson)
6	Burgess, Rodney	LCB	6-0	185	Jr.	DelRay Beach, Fla. (Oly. Hts.)
36	Burrow, Dan	FS	5-10	180	So.	Ames, Iowa
4	*Butler, Terrell	RCB	5-10	195	Jr.	Austell, Ga. (Pebblebrook)
90	Carriker, Adam	RE	6-6	255	Fr.	Kennewick, Wash.
11	***Chrisman, Joe	QB	5-11	190	Sr.	Longmont, Colo.
55	***Clanton, Jon	DT	6-2	290	Sr.	Glendale, Ariz. (Centennial)
59	**Cody, Wes	OG	6-2	305	Sr.	Fremont, Neb. (Bergan)
1	**Collins, Thunder	IB	6-2	190	Sr.	Los Angeles, Calif. (East Los Angeles/Manual Arts HS)
32	Cook, Kelly	SE	6-1	185	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Burke)
11	*Cooper, Ira	SLB	6-2	220	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)
81	**Cornelsen, Ben	WB	5-10	190	Sr.	Shawnee, Kan. (Northwest)
80	Dabbert, Will	TE	6-4	250	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (East)
4	**Davies, Judd	FB	6-0	255	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
27	*Davis, Josh	IB	5-11	210	Jr.	Loveland, Colo.
22	*DeAngelis, Sandro	PK	5-8	190	So.	Niagara Falls, Ont., Canada
30	***Diedrick, Dahrran	IB	6-0	225	Sr.	Scarborough, Ont., Canada (Cedarbrae Collegiate Inst.)
7	Dukes, Curt	QB	6-1	205	Fr.	Stony Pt., N.C. (N.-Conover)
78	*Erickson, Mike	OG	6-4	295	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Papio-LaVista)
97	Evwaraye, Seppo	DT	6-5	305	RFr.	Laurel, Neb. (Laurel-Concord)
62	Fisher, Anthony	LRE	6-1	240	Fr.	Arapahoe, Neb.
77	Flaum, M.J.	OT	6-4	315	So.	Westminster, Colo. (Nrhthlgn)
15	Fluellen, Isiah	WR	6-1	175	Fr.	Ramstein, Germany
41	Franzleubbers, Jar.	WLB	6-0	215	RFr.	Dodge, Neb.
51	*Fries, Gabe	SLB	6-2	230	Sr.	Benkelman, Neb. (Dundy Co.)
52	***Garrison, John	C	6-4	290	Sr.	Blue Springs, Mo.
39	Gieselmann, Zach	FB	5-10	215	RFr.	Arlington, Texas
15	Glissman, Garth	QB	6-6	210	Fr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Waverly)
99	***Golliday, Aaron	TE	6-4	290	Sr.	York, Neb.
72	Green, Tim	OG	6-4	315	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)
99	Greeson, Brandon	DL	6-3	325	Fr.	High Point, N.C. (Central)
6	**Grixby, DeAntae	IB	5-8	205	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
5	**Groce, DeJuan	RCB	5-10	190	Sr.	Garfield Hgts, Ohio (St. Ed)
26	Guse, Kevin	RCB	5-11	180	Jr.	Longmont, Colo.
88	Hassebroek, Adam	WB	6-1	210	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Lincoln High)
89	***Hassebroek, Troy	WB	6-4	215	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Lincoln High)
73	Helmig, Jared	NT	6-3	280	RFr.	Springfield, Mo. (Kickapoo)
17	**Hollowell, T.J.	WLB	6-0	220	Jr.	Copperas Cove, Texas
40	Hopkins, Lannie	ROV	6-2	220	RFr.	Rowlett, Texas (Rowlett)
5	Horne, David	IB	6-0	190	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
29	Huston, Kellen	RCB	5-11	195	So.	Ankeny, Iowa
49	Ickes, Adam	SLB	6-2	215	RFr.	Page, Neb. (Orchard)
51	Incognito, Richie	OT	6-3	295	RFr.	Glendale, Ariz. (Mount. Ridge)
31	Jackson, Joel	WB	5-10	180	So.	Papillion, Neb. (Papio-LaVista)
88	**Johnson, Trevor	RRE	6-4	250	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Northeast)
94	**Kabongo, Patrick	DT	6-6	305	Jr.	Montreal, Que. (Vanier Prep)
37	*Kastl, Paul	FB	5-10	230	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Pius X)
47	Keiser, Dusty	TE	6-3	240	So.	Norfolk, Neb. (Catholic)
57	***Kelsay, Chris	LRE	6-5	255	Sr.	Auburn, Neb.
19	**Klem, John	SE	6-0	210	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (East)
40	Kniel, Phillip	FB	5-11	235	RFr.	Belleville, Kan.
75	Koch, Brandon	C	6-3	275	RFr.	Cozad, Neb. (Gothenburg)
37	Koch, Sam	P	6-1	240	RFr.	Seward, Neb.
73	*Koethe, Scott	OT	6-5	285	Sr.	Central City, Neb.
74	Kolowski, David	C	6-5	295	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
67	**Kolterman, Nate	OT	6-3	300	Sr.	Seward, Neb.
45	*Kriewald, Steve	FB	5-10	255	So.	Scotia, Neb. (N. Loup-Scotia)
95	Krug, Nathan	RRE	6-4	250	RFr.	Chapman, Neb. (N. Christian)
19	*Larson, Kyle	P	6-0	195	Fr.	Funk, Neb. (Kearney)
17	LeFlore, Mark	SE	5-11	175	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
66	Leslie, Jermaine	LG	6-2	300	Fr.	Weatherford, Texas
64	Lewin, Kristopher	RE	6-3	205	Fr.	Miami, Fla. (Dade Christian)
13	Liley, Tim	SE	6-2	200	Jr.	Lakewood, Colo. (Mullen)
63	Limbaugh, Jack	C	6-4	280	Jr.	Algona, Iowa
15	Lindstrom, Brett	FS	6-0	190	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
70	***Lohr, Jason	NT	6-2	280	Sr.	Tulsa, Okla. (Jenks)
12	Long, DeWayne	WB	6-0	210	So.	W.Des Moines, Iowa (Dowling)
76	**Loos, Chris	OT	6-3	310	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
10	**Lord, Jammal	QB	6-2	210	Jr.	Bayonne, N.J.
65	Manley, Nate	OT	6-2	325	RFr.	Weeping Water (L. Christian)
70	Mann, Kurt	OL	6-4	263	Fr.	Grand Island, Neb.
32	Matteo, Derek	FS	6-0	190	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
50	McBride, Jeff	RRE	6-4	230	RFr.	Brule, Neb. (South Platte)
18	McLaughlin, Mike	WB	5-11	185	RFr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
1	*McPherson, Lornell	LCB	5-9	175	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
14	Mikluscak, Ryan	SE	6-0	185	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Bellevue West)
31	Miller, Grant	FB	6-1	215	Fr.	Peabody, Mass. (Veterans)
21	**Miller, Robin	IB	5-11	240	Jr.	Kent, Wash. (Kent-Meridian)
58	Miller, Tim	WLB	6-1	215	So.	Elmwood, Neb. (Elm.-Murdock)
44	Moore, Jay	RE	6-5	255	Fr.	Elkhorn, Neb.
23	Mutwang, Nanfwang	IB	5-6	180	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Northeast)
61	Nelson, Brian	OG	6-4	310	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
24	O'Holleran, Jack	WB	5-10	203	So.	North Platte, Neb.
8	Ommert, Ryan	WB	5-10	190	Jr.	Cambridge, Neb.
63	O'Shea, Matt	DT	6-0	260	RFr.	Irving, Texas (Jesuit Prep)
13	Otto, Jamie	ROV	5-11	200	So.	Norfolk, Neb. (Catholic)
82	*Peetz, Phil	TE	6-2	255	Jr.	Elkhorn, Neb.
65	Phillips, Jemayel	OL	6-6	320	Fr.	Winnfield, La.
56	Pike, Gary	OG	6-4	300	RFr.	Pueblo, Colo. (Centennial)
2	Pilkington, Ross	SE	6-0	195	Fr.	St. Collins, Colo. (Loveland)
31	*Pippens, Jerrell	FS	6-2	195	Jr.	Philadelphia, Pa. (W. Catholic)
69	Povendo, Nick	OT	6-3	300	So.	Keller, Texas
36	Reese, Tim	IB	5-11	250	Jr.	Seattle, Wash. (O'Dea)
29	Rexilius, Seth	CB	5-11	185	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Christian)
28	**Ricketts, Pat	RCB	5-11	180	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
86	*Ringenberg, Kyle	TE	6-4	240	Sr.	Elkhorn, Neb.
35	Roark, James	ROV	6-0	210	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Central)
30	Robison, Joey	RCB	5-9	175	RFr.	Bertrand, Neb.
22	Ross, Cory	IB	5-6	205	RFr.	Denver, Colo. (T. Jefferson)
70	Rowe, Tyler	OG	6-2	285	RFr.	Arlington, Texas
38	*Ruud, Barrett	MLB	6-2	240	So.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
42	*Safrank, Steve	MLB	6-1	235	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Gross)
54	Schott, Carson	OG	6-2	315	RFr.	Osceola, Neb.
85	Schroeder, Matt	SE	6-4	210	RFr.	Belden, Neb. (Laurel-Concord)
83	Septak, Chris	TE	6-3	245	So.	Omaha, Neb. (Millard West)
79	Sewell, Josh	C	6-2	300	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
87	Shada, Alex	TE	6-3	250	So.	Wahoo, Neb.
8	Shanley, Andy	FS	6-2	195	Fr.	St. Edward, Neb.
43	***Shanley, Scott	SLB	6-2	240	Sr.	St. Edward, Neb.
76	Shrader, Matt	LRE	6-1	230	So.	Ravenna, Neb.
17	Siefken, Scott	QB	5-11	185	So.	Boerne, Texas
23	Siegel, Shane	RCB	6-2	215	RFr.	Grand Island, Neb.
54	Sievers, Chad	MLB	6-3	225	So.	Valley, Neb. (New Mexico St.)
33	Simmons, Marques	IB	5-8	195	RFr.	Davenport, Iowa (North)
45	Smith, Jemond	SLB	6-0	220	Sr.	Kenner, La. (Bonnabel)
92	***Smith, Justin	LRE	6-4	265	Sr.	Sherman, Texas
66	Smith, Le Kevin	NT	6-2	300	RFr.	Macon, Ga. (Stratford Acad.)
16	*Stuntz, Mike	QB	6-1	200	So.	Council Bluffs, Iowa (St. Alb.)
55	*Tagoai, Junior	OG	6-2	295	Jr.	Hauula, Hawaii (St. Louis)
2	**Terpening, Aaron	ROV	5-11	190	Sr.	Salem, Ore. (North)
10	**Thomas, Benard	LRE	6-4	270	Jr.	E. Palo Alto, Calif. (St. Francis)
9	***Thomas, Wilson	SE	6-6	215	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (North)
14	Thorne, Fred	CB	5-10	180	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
25	Tiedtke, Blake	CB	5-10	200	RFr.	Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Jefferson)
54	Timm, Cory	OL	6-5	295	Fr.	Yutan, Neb.
44	Todd, Dane	FB	5-11	225	Fr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
93	Toline, Tyler	LRE	6-2	240	So.	Wahoo, Neb.
35	Tomasevich, Curt	LB	6-0	225	So.	Shelby, Neb.
68	**Vili Waldrop, Dan	OT	6-5	315	Jr.	Wilmington, Calif. (Banning)
57	Volk, Cody	OT	6-6	325	Jr.	Norfolk, Neb. (Battle Creek)
3	Washington, Fabian	LCB	6-0	175	Fr.	Bradenton, Fla. (Bayshore)
43	Weltmer, Tim	FB	6-1	240	RFr.	Smith Center, Kansas
12	White, Jay	LCB	5-9	185	Sr.	Ashville, N.C. (A.C. Reynolds)
33	White, Seth	RCB	5-10	195	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
20	Wigert, Kiffin	WB	5-9	160	So.	Cheyenne, Wyo. (Central)
7	Williams, Demorrio	WLB	6-1	205	Jr.	Longview, Texas (Kilgore Coll.)
34	Wingender, Andy	FB	5-10	245	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Mt. Michael)
44	Woodward, Matthew	TE	6-2	211	RFr.	Jefferson City, Mo.
48	Wright, Zach	PK	5-10	175	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (East)
3	Zajicek, Ben	SE	6-0	210	So.	Beatrice, Neb.

* — indicates letters earned



Nebraska 48

Arizona State 10

In his debut as Nebraska's starting quarterback, Jammal Lord rushed for 103 yards and passed for 33 yards and a touchdown.

Resting E

***Solich admits
he wasn't
quite sure
what to expect***

**By Mike
Babcock
Photos by
Scott Bruhn**

After it was over, and Nebraska had defeated Arizona State 48-10, Frank Solich admitted that he, too, hadn't really known what to expect from his fifth team.

"I probably slept less before this game than any game in my career," he said.

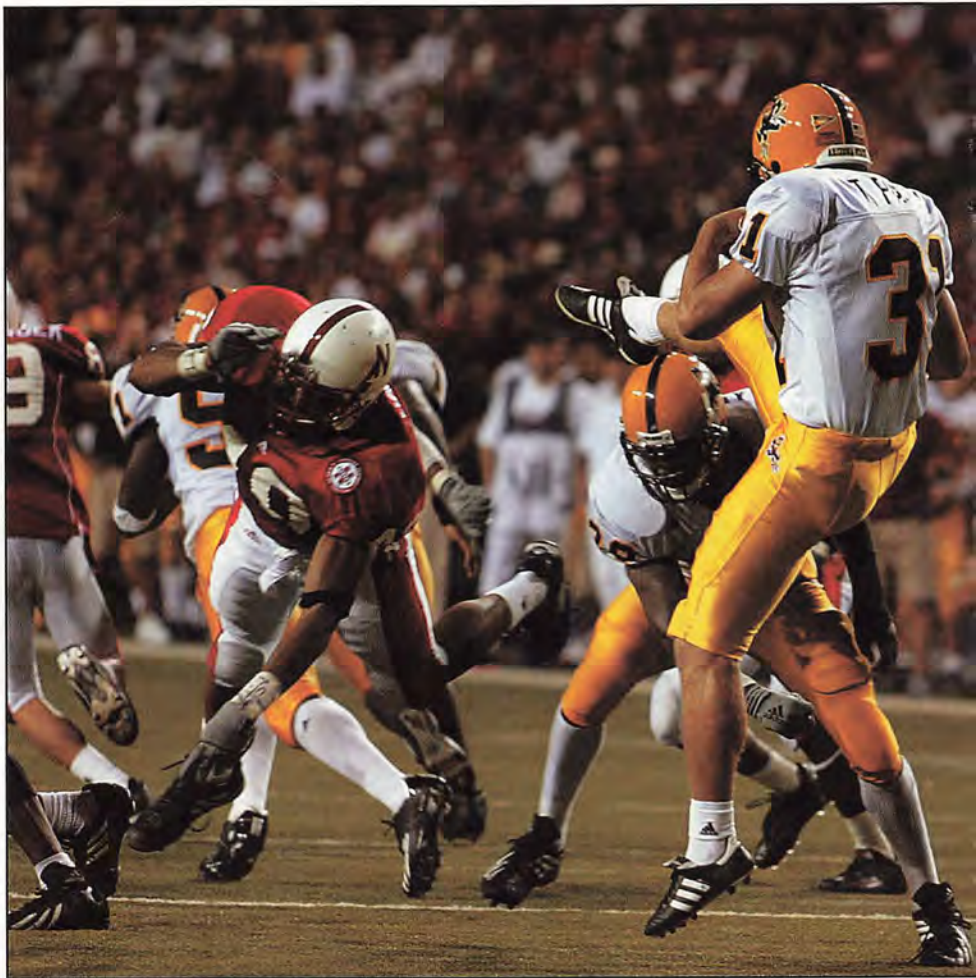
That included his first head coaching jobs in high school, as well as the first as Tom Osborne's successor. His sleepless night was "because of so many unknowns," he said.

The unknowns were at least in part a result of "all the new faces," among them Jammal Lord, who was taking over at quarterback for Heisman Trophy winner Eric Crouch.

Check that. Lord wasn't an unknown. The junior from Bayonne, N.J., "did not exceed my expectations" said Solich. "I thought Jammal did a great job."

No, the unknowns had more to do with a young offensive line and some young players on defense, particularly in the secondary but also in the interior line. Oh yes, and the mindset of the defense might have been an unknown, eight months after last season's disastrous final two games.

Solich didn't necessarily doubt the defense, of course. But people outside the program did. So the Blackshirts' effort "meant a ton," senior rush end



Chris Kelsay said.

The season-ending losses to Colorado and Miami "left a really bitter taste," said Kelsay. "I think we proved we're better than OK. We proved it to ourselves and to our fans."

"Anybody else, I could care less."

Arizona State managed 258 yards of offense, but only 83 on the ground and 34 of those came on a Mike Williams touchdown run late in the third quarter, with Nebraska leading 24-3. The Sun Devils guessed right against a stunt and "caught us off-guard," Kelsay said.

"I was hoping to keep them out of the end zone."

Even so, 10 points weren't anywhere close to enough, thanks to the scrambling of Lord, who rushed for 103 yards and threw a 9-yard touch-

down pass to a wide-open Wilson Thomas, and Nebraska's special teams, which offset the Arizona State touchdown with one of their own.

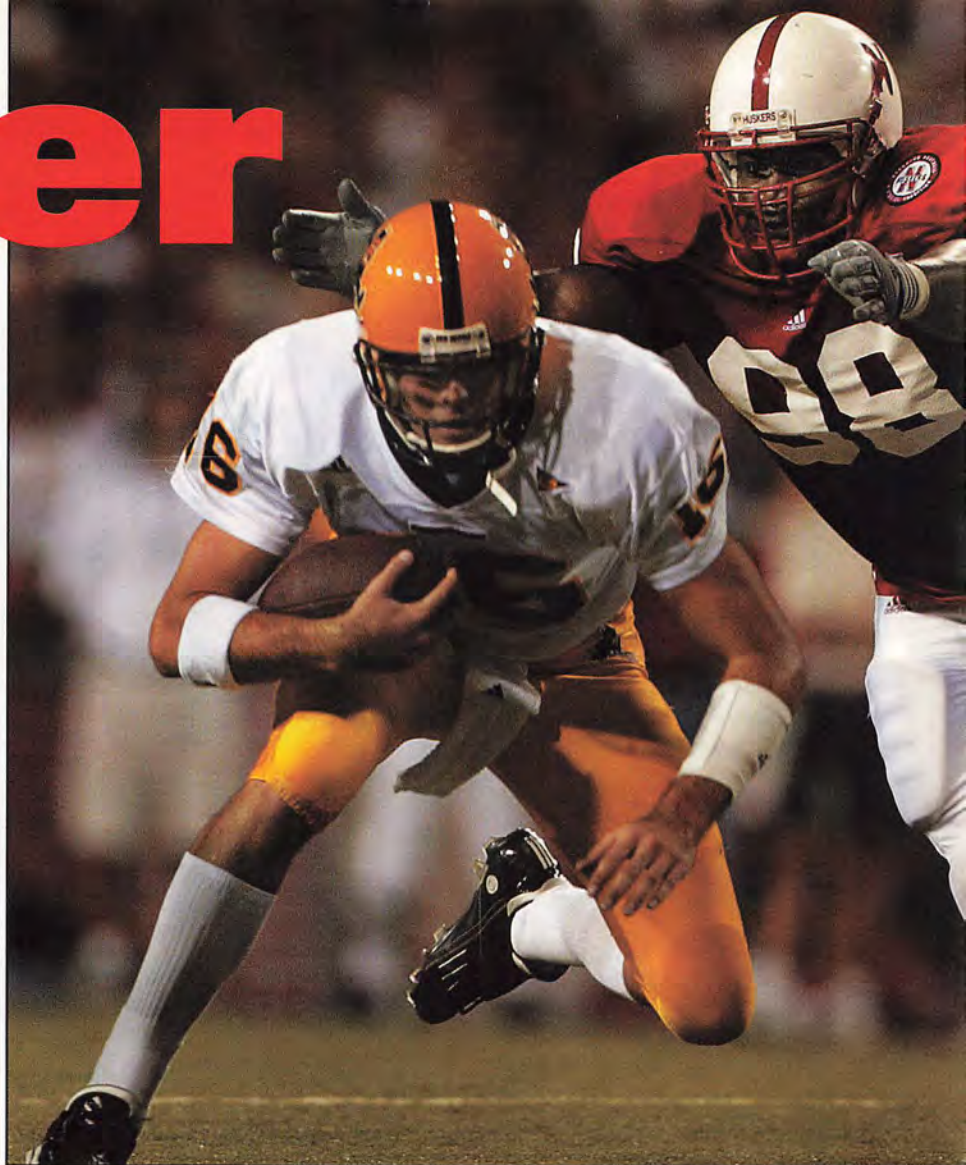
Less than 2 minutes after Lord's touchdown pass, Demorrio Williams blocked a Tim Parker punt and Scott Shanle scooped up the ball at the 6-yard line and ran it into the end zone.

In the fourth quarter, Nebraska's Lannie Hopkins blocked a Parker punt, which Williams recovered at the Arizona State 9-yard line, setting up a Dahrran Diedrick touchdown.

"We do have some guys that can block some punts now," said Solich.

Williams' block "was a big play," he said. "The timing of that block was great. We just weren't controlling the football game and that got us some momentum."

asier



Special teams and the defense helped Nebraska take control in the season-opener. The Huskers, who blocked two punts all last season, blocked two Tim Parker punts in the opener, including one by Lannie Hopkins (left) that set up a fourth quarter touchdown. The defense sacked ASU quarterbacks four times, including 1 1/2 by rush end Demoine Adams, shown dropping Andrew Walter (above).

The blocked punts were only part of what pleased Solich about the play of the special teams. Place-kicker Josh Brown consistently put the ball in the end zone on kickoffs, in addition to kicking field goals of 40 and 42 yards.

The 40-yarder came on the game's first series, a stalled drive.

After Arizona State tied the score with a 33-yard field late in the first quarter, fullback Judd Davies gave the Cornhuskers the lead for good, finishing off a 9-play, 72-yard touchdown drive.

That was Nebraska's only sustained touchdown drive of the game.

Credit Arizona State's defense, said Cornhusker center John Garrison. The Sun Devils "were doing a lot of different stuff, moving around well. That made it kind of difficult."

Nebraska finished with 283 yards rushing, 79 of them from Diedrick. The Big 12's leading rusher last season, had a game-high 18 carries, sharing time with Thunder Collins.

Diedrick "got some very tough yards and was very physical," Solich said.

The Cornhuskers made adjustments at halftime to turn a 10-3 lead into what appeared on the scoreboard to be a rout. "I think they probably wore down a little bit, and then once you lose momentum because of the kicking game, sometimes it gets tough to hang in there," said Solich.

The temperature at kickoff was 76 degrees, but the humidity was 71 percent.

With Arizona State wearing down, Solich began sending in eager

reserves. Cory Ross, a redshirted freshman I-back, ran 34 yards for a touchdown with 2:10 remaining, and 15 seconds later, true freshman cornerback Fabian Washington scored on a 29-yard interception return.

Nebraska's motto this season is: Start strong, finish stronger. And it is something the players are "taking to heart," Solich said. "It's not just something on the wall."

With 12 more regular-season games, "this is the first start," said defensive coordinator Craig Bohl. "We just need to continue to take steps to finish stronger and stronger."

The key to the defense was the play up front, with four rush ends and five tackles rotating.

"You're going to see a lot of defensive linemen play for us," Bohl said.

Husker Players of the Game



D. Williams



L. Hopkins

Special Efforts

Nebraska's special teams were, well, special in the 48-10 victory.

Punt blocks by Demorrio Williams and Lannie Hopkins led to 14 points. And Josh Brown was two-for-two on field goal attempts, nailing kicks of 40 and 42 yards.

"My defense tonight wasn't too strong," said Williams, a weakside linebacker playing in his first game at Nebraska after transferring from Kilgore, Texas, Junior College.



J. Brown

"But I helped the team the best way I could."

Scott Shanley picked up his blocked punt and scored a touchdown. And he recovered Hopkins' blocked punt to set up a Dahrran Diedrick touchdown midway through the fourth quarter. "I was very pleased with the special teams' play," Coach Frank Solich said. "That kind of turned the tide for us."

The blocked punts were "great to see," he said. "But really, when you look at all of the phases of special teams, from kickoff to kickoff returns to punt returns to field goals by Josh Brown and that phase of the game, we played about as well as we felt we could play. So that was encouraging."

Solich said he wasn't surprised by the play of the special teams.

"We expect them to be very good every week." ■



Two young Huskers got into the scoring act late in the game. Redshirt freshman I-back Cory Ross breaks loose on a 34-yard touchdown run (above) with 2:10 remaining. On the next play from scrimmage, true freshman cornerback Fabian Washington intercepted a pass and returned it 29 yards for another score.

Solich was pleased with the fact that except for the touchdown run when they guessed right, the Sun Devils weren't able to break big plays.

"I you look at them last year, they put a lot of points on the board," he said. "They did that by utilizing their speed at receiver and hitting people on deep throws."

"We were fortunate, and our guys played well enough to keep that from happening."

It's reasonable to assume that such concerns contributed to Solich's difficulty in sleeping the night before the game. He might sleep better the night before the Troy State game.

But "we do have to prove ourselves," he said. "There's no question about that." ■





4TH & 1 INCHES

Notes And Quotes From The Arizona State Game

FIRST-TIME STARTING

Four players on offense and three on defense got their first starts at Nebraska. Junior quarterback Jammal Lord, sophomore left guard Mike Erickson, senior right guard Wes Cody and redshirted freshman left tackle Richie Incognito were first-time offensive starters.

Sophomore middle linebacker Barrett Ruud, junior nose tackle Ryon Bingham and redshirted freshman nickel back Shane Siegel were first-time defensive starters.

In addition, senior wingback Troy Hassebrook started his first regular-season game. Hassebrook started as a redshirted freshman against Tennessee in the 2000 Fiesta Bowl game.

NEW BLACKSHIRTS

Early in the week, 15 players received black practice jerseys. Eight of the 15 got them for the first time: Ruud, Bingham, tackle Patrick Kabongo, free safety Philip Bland, rover Aaron Terpening, weakside linebackers T.J. Hollowell and Demorrio Williams and rush end Trevor Johnson.

FRESH FACES

Seven Cornhusker true freshmen suited up for the game, but only two saw action: split end Ross Pilkington and cornerback Fabian Washington, who intercepted a pass and returned it 29 yards for the final touchdown. "That's got to be a huge confidence-builder for him," said co-captain Chris Kelsay.

"It meant a lot to me," Washington said. "I just read the quarterback and got to where I needed to be."

The true freshmen who suited up but didn't play were quarterback Curt Dukes, I-back David Horne, offensive guard Jermaine Leslie, tight end Matt Herian and wide receiver Mark LeFlore.

Nebraska used 78 players, while Arizona State used 51.

INJURIES

Redshirted freshman defensive tackle Jared Helming suffered what was apparently Nebraska's only serious injury, a torn left anterior cruciate ligament, which will require surgery.

Junior Tagoa'i suffered a broken right thumb and Jake Anderson suffered a strained left medial collateral ligament. Tagoa'i and Anderson are back-up offensive guards.

Middle linebacker Chad Sievers, nose tackle Jason Lohr and I-backs Robin Miller and Marques Simmons were among those who didn't suit up for the game because of injuries.

Lohr has been lost for the season after reinjuring his knee in the final preseason scrimmage.

UNPREPARED

Nebraska's defense was able to surprise Arizona State on third and long.

"They brought in that dime package and they played the odd defense," said Arizona State Coach Dirk Koetter. "They confused us having nine guys standing at the line of scrimmage and running some cross blitzes. We didn't prepare for that. We'd never seen them do that. They played a little bit more zone and they played a lot less bump-and-run coverage than we expected them to play."

BIG PROBLEM ON THE END

Although he was credited with only one tackle, a 13-yard sack, Kelsay created problems for the right side of the Arizona State offensive line.

"We were a bit out-manned there, our right tackles, Adrian Ayala and Damien Niko, going against their fine All-American," Koetter said. "I thought those guys competed well."

"We tried to protect our tackles as best we could, but a couple of times we couldn't. We left our tackles on an island, and Kelsay made us pay."

So did Demoiné Adams, the other starting rush end. Adams had a sack and a half.

"We're trying to bring the pain, trying to show people we have one of the best defenses in the country," Adams said, adding that defensive coordinator Craig Bohl's metaphor for the way the Blackshirts are supposed to pursue is "like dogs chasing a piece of meat."

The Blackshirts finished with four sacks total. Lannie Hopkins shared one with Adams, and Patrick Kabongo and Justin Smith shared the other.

Kabongo also forced a fumble. Cornerback Pat Ricketts had a career-high three pass breakups, and Ruud was unofficially credited with a team-high eight tackles. ■

2002 Schedule

1 Aug. 24	Arizona State, W 48-10	1-0
2 Aug. 31	Troy State, 6 p.m.	
3 Sept. 7	Utah State, 6 p.m.	
4 Sept. 14	@ Penn State, 7 p.m., ABC	
5 Sept. 28	@ Iowa State, TBA	
6 Oct. 5	McNeese State, TBA	
7 Oct. 12	Missouri, TBA	
8 Oct. 19	@ Oklahoma State, TBA	
9 Oct. 26	@ Texas A&M, TBA	
10 Nov. 2	Texas, TBA	
11 Nov. 9	Kansas (Homecoming), TBA	
12 Nov. 16	@ Kansas State, TBA	
13 Nov. 29	Colorado, 2:30 p.m., ABC	
Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Houston, Texas, 7 p.m., ABC	

Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

Troy State (0-0)	
Aug. 31	@ Nebraska
Sept. 7	@ Alabama-Birmingham
Sept. 14	Southern Utah
Sept. 21	@ Iowa State
Sept. 28	@ Missouri
Oct. 5	Austin Peay
Oct. 12	@ Mississippi State
Oct. 19	@ Marshall
Oct. 26	Florida Atlantic
Nov. 2	@ Arkansas
Nov. 9	Florida A&M
Nov. 16	Utah State

Utah State (0-0)	
Aug. 31	Utah
Sept. 7	@ Nebraska
Sept. 14	Idaho State
Sept. 21	@ Iowa
Sept. 28	@ Boise State
Oct. 4	BYU
Oct. 19	New Mexico
Oct. 26	@ Louisiana-Monroe
Nov. 9	New Mexico State
Nov. 16	@ Troy State
Nov. 30	@ Middle Tennessee State

Big 12 at a Glance

Saturday, Aug. 24
Nebraska 48, Arizona State 10
Florida State 38, Iowa State 31
Ohio State 45, Texas Tech 21

Friday, Aug. 30
Oklahoma at Tulsa

Saturday, Aug. 31
Troy State at Nebraska

Kansas at Iowa State
Illinois vs. Missouri, St. Louis
Oklahoma State at Louisiana Tech
Louisiana-Lafayette at Texas A&M
North Texas at Texas
Western Kentucky at Kansas State
Colorado State vs. Colorado, Denver
Baylor at California

Game 2

Troy State Aug. 31

Location: Troy, Ala.
Enrollment: 6,630
2001 record: 7-4
Coach: Larry Blakeney,
12th year
Series: Nebraska leads 1-0



6 p.m. CDT

Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Trojan to Watch

Wide receiver Heyward Skipper is the Trojans' big-play threat. Skipper had 60 catches for 995 yards and nine touchdowns last season. He had four catches for 81 yards and a touchdown in a 42-14 loss to Nebraska in Lincoln. Skipper also returned 21 punts for 215 yards.



Quick Facts

The Trojans are playing their first official season as a I-A member after going 7-4 in their I-A "transition" season a year ago. Included were three wins over I-A foes and a monumental upset of Southeastern Conference power Mississippi State. Of the team's four losses, three came against Nebraska, Maryland and national champion Miami.

The Trojans will have a new starting quarterback in sophomore Hansell Bearden, who takes over for four-year starter Brock Nutter, who threw for 2,098 yards and 14 touchdowns last season. Bearden completed 16 of 28 passes for 182 yards and two touchdowns last season, mostly in a mop-up role.

Nebraska is the first of three Big 12 opponents on the Trojan schedule. Troy State plays at Iowa State Sept. 21 and at Missouri the following week.

On Deck

Utah State Sept. 7

Location: Logan, Utah
Enrollment: 21,490
2001 record: 4-7
Coach: Mike Dennehy, 3rd year
Series: Nebraska leads 6-0



6 p.m. CDT

Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE 9	Wilson Thomas***	6-6	215	Sr.
19	John Klem**	6-0	210	Sr.
LT 51	Richie Incognito	6-3	295	RFr.
67	Nate Kolterman**	6-3	300	Sr.
LG 78	Mike Erickson*	6-4	295	So.
55	Junior Tagoa'i*	6-2	295	Jr.
C 52	John Garrison***	6-4	290	Sr.
79	Josh Sewell	6-2	300	Jr.
RG 59	Wes Cody**	6-2	305	Sr.
71	Jake Andersen	6-1	290	So.
RT 68	Dan Vili Waldrop**	6-5	315	Jr.
69	Nick Povendo	6-3	300	So.
TE 99	Aaron Golliday***	6-4	290	Sr.
86	Kyle Ringenberg*	6-4	240	Sr.
QB 10	Jammal Lord**	6-2	210	Jr.
16	Mike Stuntz*	6-1	200	So.
FB 4	Judd Davies**	6-0	255	Jr.
45	Steve Kriewald*	5-10	255	So.
IB 30	Dahrran Diedrick***	6-0	225	Sr.
1	Thunder Collins**	6-2	190	Sr.
WB 89	Troy Hassebroek***	6-4	215	Sr.
or 81	Ben Cornelsen**	5-10	190	Sr.
PK 26	Josh Brown***	6-2	190	Sr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR 57	Chris Kelsay***	6-5	255	Sr.
92	Justin Smith***	6-4	265	Sr.
NT 59	Ryon Bingham*	6-3	280	Jr.
66	Le Kevin Smith	6-2	300	RFr.
DT 55	Jon Clanton***	6-2	290	Sr.
or 94	Patrick Kabongo**	6-6	305	Jr.
RR 98	Demoiné Adams***	6-2	260	Sr.
88	Trevor Johnson**	6-4	250	Jr.
SLB 43	Scott Shanley***	6-2	240	Sr.
47	Ira Cooper*	6-2	220	So.
MLB 38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	So.
42	Steve Safronek*	6-1	235	Jr.
WLB 7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	205	Jr.
or 17	T.J. Hollowell**	6-0	220	Jr.
LCB 28	Pat Ricketts**	5-11	180	Jr.
or 1	Lornell McPherson*	5-9	175	So.
FS 21	Philip Bland*	5-11	205	So.
31	Jerrell Pippens**	6-2	195	Jr.
ROV 2	Aaron Terpening***	5-11	190	Sr.
40	Lannie Hopkins	6-2	210	So.
RCB 5	DeJuan Groce***	5-10	190	Sr.
23	Shane Siegel	6-2	215	RFr.
P 19	Kyle Larson	6-0	195	Jr.

TROY STATE OFFENSE

WR 3	Heyward Skipper***	6-0	181	Sr.
80	Zsan Robinson	6-2	180	Fr.
LT 71	Stan Curington***	6-7	294	Sr.
60	Henry Tellis*	6-5	297	So.
LG 61	Robin Lee***	6-2	288	Sr.
67	Lee Walls***	6-4	282	Sr.
C 55	Rodney Jordan***	6-4	287	Sr.
64	Wes Garmon	6-1	281	RFr.
RG 70	Donnie Bostian	6-6	321	So.
59	Lee Milliner	6-3	270	So.
RT 76	Brandon Hall*	6-4	318	Jr.
73	James Edwards	6-5	285	RFr.
TE 86	Cedric Phillips**	6-2	240	Jr.
40	Jonathan Tomlin***	6-3	240	Sr.
QB 18	Hansell Bearden*	6-2	200	So.
7	Matt Ray	6-3	205	Jr.
RB 33	LeBarron Black***	5-10	215	Sr.
9	DeWhitt Betterson*	6-0	210	So.
FB 13	Adrian Moore**	6-1	230	Jr.
6	Chris Cox**	5-9	200	Jr.
WR 5	Jason Samples*	6-3	185	So.
84	Torin Rutledge	6-3	175	Fr.
K 20	Thomas Olmsted	6-4	215	Fr.

TROY STATE DEFENSE

LE 99	Shelton Felton***	6-2	250	Sr.
94	Demarcus Ware*	6-5	220	So.
DT 96	Davern Williams**	6-3	283	Sr.
78	Eric Thomas*	6-1	250	So.
NT 93	Jose Gamboa***	6-1	265	Sr.
42	Byron Knight**	6-0	276	Sr.
RE 72	Osi Umenviora***	6-3	267	Sr.
92	Jamaal Holt	6-1	242	So.
SLB 28	Deloise Moore*	6-1	210	Sr.
41	Robby Farmer*	6-1	220	So.
MLB 46	Naazir Yamini***	5-11	234	Sr.
30	Leverne Johnson	6-0	235	RFr.
WLB 11	Gordon Williams***	6-0	220	Sr.
50	Bernard Davis	6-1	230	RFr.
LCB 34	Jermaine Miller	6-0	175	RFr.
8	Johnny Faulk	5-11	175	RFr.
FS 10	Derrick Ansley*	6-1	180	So.
27	Deiric Jackson***	5-9	183	Sr.
SS 38	David Philpaw***	5-10	190	Sr.
4	Damien Coleman*	6-0	195	So.
RCB 16	Rayshun Reed***	5-11	190	Sr.
25	Adrian Ghent	5-8	183	Fr.
P 20	Thomas Olmsted	6-4	215	Fr.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA

vs.

TROY STATE

NO ONE IS SURE WHAT'S IN THE 2002 HUSKER PACKAGE, BUT IT'S THE TROJANS' TURN TO TAKE A PEEK INSIDE.

PICKS

TROY STATE AT NEBRASKA

Brian Hill Editor

Nebraska showed it has many weapons and can score in many ways in its opener, and the offense should be running smoother in game 2. Troy State will be breaking in a new quarterback, who is replacing a four-year starter. Memorial Stadium certainly isn't a good place to do that. **Nebraska 52, Troy State 9**

Mike Babcock Contributing Editor

Troy State isn't the worst team on the schedule. The Trojans did a number on Mississippi State last season, at Starkville. And the good thing is, the Cornhuskers don't have to

repay the visit by traveling to Alabama any time soon. Troy State's problem will be its starters wearing down as the game goes on. That will account for the disparity in the score. **Nebraska 49, Troy State 7**

Terry Douglass Grand Island Independent Sports Editor

The Cornhuskers will be eager to clean up any opening-night jitters, so motivation shouldn't be a problem. Having played at Lincoln last year might help a Troy State team that returns nine starters on offense and eight on defense. However, Nebraska's superior overall talent will win out in the end. **Nebraska 38, Troy State 10**

BY THE NUMBERS



Dahrran Diedrick dives over the top for a 2-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter.

Nebraska vs. Arizona State

Aug. 24, 2002 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

Score By Quarters

Arizona State	3	0	7	0	—	10
Nebraska	3	7	14	24	—	48

Individual Statistics

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Lord, J.	17	103	6.1	33	0
Diedrick, D.	18	79	4.4	15	1
Ross, C.	3	44	14.7	34	1
Collins, T.	10	22	2.2	8	0
Davis, J.	3	22	7.3	17	0
Davis, J.	3	7	2.3	4	1
Kriewald, S.	2	6	3.0	4	0
Grixby, D.	1	4	4.0	4	0
Stuntz, M.	2	-4	-2.0	3	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	5-13-0	.385	33	1

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Thomas, W.	3	8	2.7	9	1
Hassebroek, T.	2	25	12.5	22	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	5	164	32.8	48

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Groce, D.	4	30	7.5	22	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	3	60	20.0	28	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Ruud, B.	3	5	8	1-6	0	0
Hollowell, T.J.	1	3	4	0	0	0
McPherson, L.	2	2	4	0	0	0

Bingham, R.	1	3	4	1-1	0	0
Ricketts, P.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Groce, D.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Adams, D.	1	2	3	2-13	0	1.5-13
Cooper, I.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Hopkins, L.	1	2	3	1-4	0	.5-4
Smith, J.	0	3	3	1-9	0	.5-9
Kabongo, P.	0	3	3	1-8	0	.5-8
Smith, L.	1	1	2	1-1	0	0
Johnson, T.	1	1	2	2-7	0	0
Clanton, J.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Williams, D.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Shanle, S.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Bland, P.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Washington, F.	1	1	2	0	1-29	0
Pippens, J.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Kelsay, C.	1	0	1	1-13	0	1-13
Safraneck, S.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Terpening, A.	1	0	1	1-1	0	0
Siegel, S.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Hassebroek, T.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Adams, T.	0	1	1	0	0	0

ARIZONA STATE

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Williams, M.	12	77	6.4	34	1
Canidate, C.	5	14	2.8	13	0
Christensen, C.	8	7	0.9	13	0
Hill, H.	2	-1	-0.3	3	0
Walter, A.	2	-14	-7.0	3	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Walter, A.	7-16-0	.437	46	0
Christensen, C.	6-16-0	.375	77	0
Goodenough, A.	4-8-1	.500	52	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
McDonald, S.	7	73	10.4	14	0
Hagan, D.	4	36	9.0	13	0

Scoring

NU — Josh Brown 40-yard field goal
ASU — Mike Barth 33-yard field goal
NU — Judd Davies 2-yard run (Brown kick)
NU — Wilson Thomas 9-yard pass from Jammal Lord (Brown kick)
NU — Scott Shanle 6-yard blocked punt return (Brown kick)
ASU — Mike Williams 34-yard run (Barth kick)
NU — Brown 42-yard field goal
NU — Dahrran Diedrick 2-yard run (Brown kick)
NU — Cory Ross 34-yard run (Brown kick)
NU — Fabian Washington 29-yard interception return (Brown kick)
Att. — 77,779
Weather — cloudy
Temp. — 76

Team Stats

	ASU	NU
First Downs	17	19
Rushing	7	15
Passing	9	1
Penalty	1	3
Rushing Attempts	30	59
Yards Gained Rushing	140	311
Yards Lost Rushing	57	28
Net Yards Rushing	83	283
Net Yards Passing	175	33
Passes Attempted	41	13
Passes Completed	17	5
Had Intercepted	1	0
Total Plays	71	72
Total Net Yards	258	316
Avg. Gain Per Play	3.6	4.4
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	0-0
Penalties-Yards	5-63	6-42
Punts-Yards	10-346	5-164
Avg. Per Punt	34.6	32.8
Punt Returns-Yards	2-16	6-57
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	1-29
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-28	3-60
Possession Time	28:06	31:54

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Parker, T.	8	346	43.3	63
Team	2	0	0.0	0

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Lightfoot, D.	2	16	8.0	10	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Lightfoot, D.	1	22	22.0	22	0
Hill, H.	1	6	6.0	6	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Shivers, J.	7	9	16	0	0	0
Stewart, R.	5	5	10	3-9	0	1-7
Williams, A.	5	3	8	1-2	0	0
Bates, S.	2	6	8	0	0	0
Unck, M.	2	5	7	0	0	0
Golden, J.	4	1	5	1-2	0	0
Montesanto, B.	0	5	5	1-1	0	0
Suggs, T.	2	2	4	1-1	0	0
Baker, L.	1	4	5	0	0	0
Jones, S.	0	3	3	0	0	0
Williams, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Amobi, J.	1	2	3	1-2	0	0
Oliver, R.J.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Smith, J.	2	0	2	1-7	0	1-7
Verdon, J.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Nguyen, K.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Hudson, B.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Johnson, N.	1	0	1	1-3	0	1-3
Breckenridge, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mason, M.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Williams, M.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Lightfoot, D.	0	1	1	0	0	0



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Roots Run Deep

Good things happened for former Husker walk-on Jamrog

By Mike Babcock

Jeff Jamrog was a graduate assistant, serving as a host for Nebraska football recruits, and the time had come for them to meet with Coach Tom Osborne.

"Hey, 'Hog,' can you bring those recruits over?" Osborne wanted to know.

"It was funny," Jamrog said, looking back. "That was the first time it had come out of his mouth."

"It" was a reference to "Hog," Jamrog's nickname for about as long as he can remember.

There are several versions of why he was given the nickname.

It might have begun as a variation on his last name, with the "r" being replaced by an "h," the "rog" simply transformed into "hog." It very well could have started there.

It could have been reinforced when, as a growing boy, he ate "like a hog."

"Hopefully that's not it anymore," he said.

And it seemed an appropriate nickname when he played ninth-grade basketball, because "they said I didn't pass it enough," he said. "So they called me 'Hog.'" As in ball hog.

"I guess it was for a variety of reasons," he said.

Whatever those reasons, Jamrog had the nickname when he walked on at Nebraska in 1983. But Osborne never called him "Hog" during his three varsity seasons. "Most of the time he called me 'Jeff.' But he called me 'Hog' there," said Jamrog, who remembered being "shocked."

Osborne's unexpected familiarity

JEFF JAMROG

Defensive Line Coach

Third Year

Alma Mater:

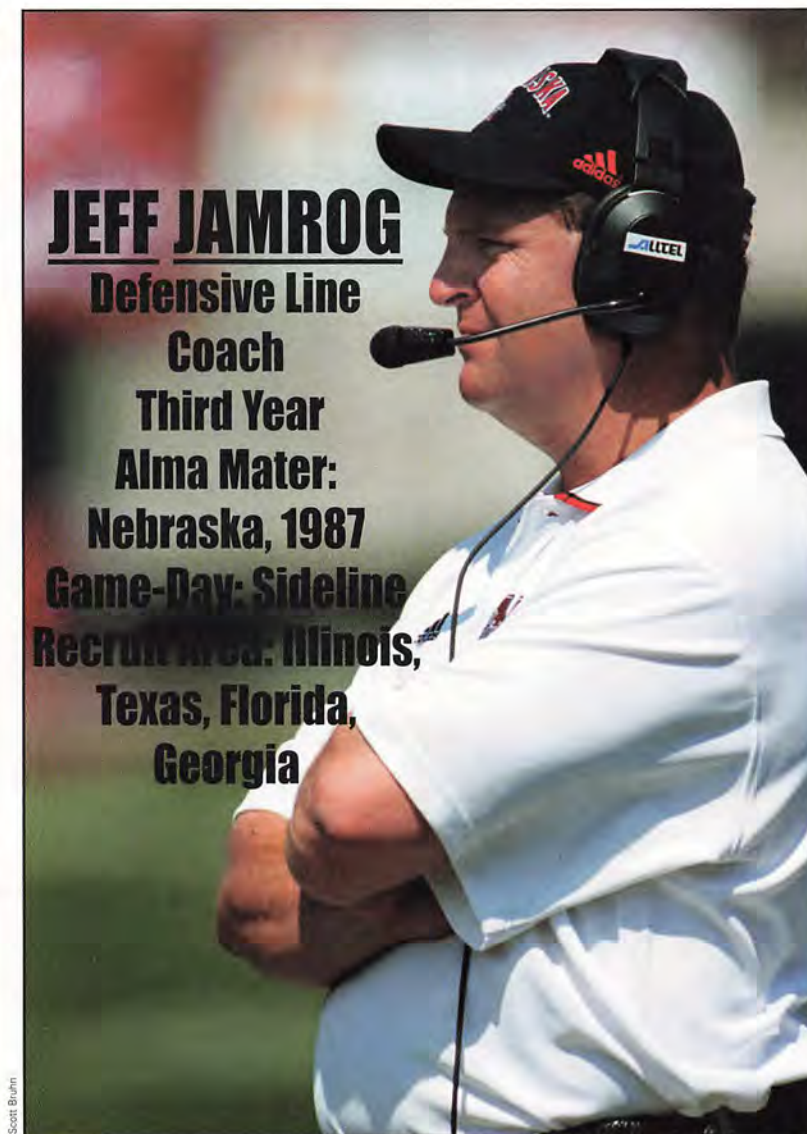
Nebraska, 1987

Game-Day: Sideline

Recruit Area: Illinois,

Texas, Florida,

Georgia



Scott Bruhn

was evidence that although he might have seemed distant, at times, to those who didn't know him, he took great personal interest in his players.

And that was the case with Jamrog, to whom Osborne offered the graduate assistant's position as a means of continuing his studies while deciding whether he might be interested in coaching.

Jamrog, an Academic All-American as a Cornhusker senior in 1987, had earned a post-graduate

scholarship and thought it would be a good idea to begin a master's degree program.

He had majored in business administration and was considering a career as a stockbroker. That wasn't a given, however, so Osborne told him the grad assistant's position "would be a good opportunity to get my feet wet in the coaching profession, if that's the route I wanted to go," Jamrog said.

"If not, I would get my master's

and go into the business world."

As it turned out, the business world became Jamrog's road not taken. During his two years as a Nebraska grad assistant, 1988 and 1989, he "decided that's what I was looking for."

He left for a full-time assistant's job at South Dakota in 1990, beginning a 10-year coaching sojourn that took him to Nebraska-Omaha, New Mexico State and then back to Nebraska.

"I was hoping it would happen at some point," Jamrog said of his return to coach the Cornhusker defensive line following Charlie McBride's retirement after the 1999 season.

Jamrog applied for the position Craig Bohl got when Kevin Steele left for the NFL after the 1994 season. "It wasn't like I went to bed every night thinking, 'Geez, I wonder when the next job at Nebraska is going to open up,'" he said. "But you always hope at some point in time, if you did a good job at those other schools, that Coach Osborne or Coach (Frank) Solich would notice."

"If you're at the right place at the right time, those things will happen."

Jamrog was Tony Samuel's defensive coordinator at New Mexico State when the opportunity for which he had been preparing arose. Samuel had been his position coach at Nebraska, and, more importantly, was one of those who influenced his decision to become a coach.

There were many others, including Osborne; Jim Kane, his coach at Elkhorn, Neb.; Mt. Michael High School; and Bob Guy, his coach in seventh and eighth grade. "I was fortunate to have a lot of role models, who had a big influence on my life," said Jamrog. "I felt that if I could have the same kind of impact on the players I coached, it would be well worth the time involved in this profession."

Jamrog turned down scholarship offers from smaller schools in order to walk on at Nebraska, something he was compelled to do or always wonder if he could have succeeded.

Osborne told him "good things will happen if you work hard," he said.

And that advice helped form the foundation for a coaching philosophy shaped by the demands of paying his own way for two-and-a-half years. His family probably could

have afforded to pick up the tab, but his dad told him if he was going to walk on, he was going to pay his own way.

So "I understand what that's all about, the problems," he said.

He mowed lawns, with the help of his great grandfather, and worked in a packinghouse during the summer following his senior year in high school in order to walk on at Nebraska.

In the spring of his third year, he earned a scholarship and was a regular at defensive end his final two seasons, alternating as a junior and then starting as a senior.

Jamrog's appreciation for his job runs deep.

He came to games at Memorial Stadium with his dad, Jerry, who died of cancer "about six months after I got done playing," he said at the news conference to announce his hiring.

Nebraska lost to Oklahoma 17-7 in 1987, his senior season, in what was billed as the "Game of the Century II." During his father's funeral, Jeff recalled, the priest said, "We pray for Jerry Jamrog and we also pray that Nebraska beats Oklahoma next year (the 1988 season)."

Nebraska beat the Sooners 7-3 that fall, his first as a grad assistant — "Hog" to those who knew him well. ■



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Going for It

After near miss, talented seniors ready to take the final step

By Todd Henrichs

In a way, the "Team 02" t-shirts stand for a second chance.

The senior leaders on the Nebraska volleyball team insist there's no looking back, that the simple gray t-shirts they designed for practice are meant to depict a whole new season.

But undeniably, tucked away in the back of their minds is the haunting memory of their last match. With a spot in the national championship final on the line back in December, the Huskers twice blew significant leads in games and eventually lost to Stanford.

Many sleepless nights and an off-season later, NU coach John Cook certainly hasn't forgotten.

"We felt like we had a better team," Cook said. "I think the players that went through that have an edge to them. It's a different mentality now.

"Instead of protecting, we're going after it."

Without last year's final four meltdown, Nebraska's four talented seniors would be poised to do something never before seen in college volleyball. No team has ever won three consecutive national championships, something many thought could change after NU went unbeaten with four sophomores playing key roles in the 2000 season.

Green then, Greichaly Cepero, Amber Holmquist, Laura Pilakowski and Lindsay Wischmeier have grown into the nucleus of the most experienced team in the country. Eight



Greichaly Cepero



Amber Holmquist

The Senior Class



Laura Pilakowski



Lindsay Wischmeier

Huskers can show you a national championship ring from 2000, and the last two waves of newcomers have both ranked among the top recruiting classes in the country.

The pressure of defending the championship is gone, but the expectations within the program haven't changed. Before the first practice,

Cook challenged his seniors to etch their names into the history book.

"They really have a chance to make their mark as a class not only at Nebraska but nationally," Cook said. "We look at wins and losses, we look at how many times they've been All-American. You can look at their academic accomplishments.

"It's realistic to say they could be one of the most successful classes in the history of volleyball."

The Huskers, ranked second behind Stanford in the USA Today/AVCA preseason coaches' poll, begin their title quest Saturday, Aug. 31, facing Pittsburgh in the Radisson Hotel Roberts Classic in Muncie, Ind.

On the way to the final four in New Orleans, Nebraska will face challenges from title contenders Southern California, Pepperdine and Arizona. The Huskers are overwhelming favorites to win an otherwise unpredictable Big 12 Conference race. Nebraska has won 51 straight matches against league opponents dating back to these seniors' freshman year.

The team's captain, Wischmeier said finishing on top is great motivation.

"Each year, we've matured on the court and off the court. We've become much stronger and much more aggressive, and each year our leadership has increased," she said. "This year, we know what we have to do as seniors and make sure everybody

feels like a family here. That was something that was sort of missing last year."

NU must replace Jenny Kropp and Nancy Metcalf, both All-Americans on the court but often-unwilling leaders off it. Seeking to find the same formula for chemistry concocted in the 2000 championship season, Cook has the team focused on a hand-sized landscape rock with the word "trust" engraved in it.

Cook, too, has promised changes from last season. He'll experiment before settling upon a lineup, and with some versatility among younger players, there are several possibilities.

Junior Sara Westling, redshirt freshman Melissa Elmer and even true freshman Olivia Waldowski — a rare recruit from California — are considerations to replace Kropp at a middle blocker spot.

Junior Anna Schrad, sophomore Ally Rebholz or freshman Jennifer Saleaumua could take Metcalf's slot on the right side. Schrad started at one of the outside hitter positions last year, sharing time with Rebholz on occasion.

Saleaumua, who joined the pro-

gram last spring, gives the Huskers something they lacked last year. Cook calls the native of San Diego "an exceptional passer" and a player who makes those around her "instantly better."

Cepero, Holmquist and Pilakowski have all been All-Americans at one point or time at Nebraska, and Wischmeier's role is likely to expand with rules changes made for this season. The addition of a libero will allow the defensive specialist to be on the court in almost all situations.

That's a plus, Cook said, especially with Wischmeier in such a key leadership role. Almost since the very point Nebraska's season ended last year, Wischmeier has been at the helm of the ship and steering a new course.

"You never know until the end, but it just has a different feel this year," Cook said. "We're coming into this season with a lot less interference than we had last year. Our senior leadership this year is different.

"Those are intangible type things that you can't really coach or create. You can work on it, and you can talk about it, but it's only there when you can feel it." ■

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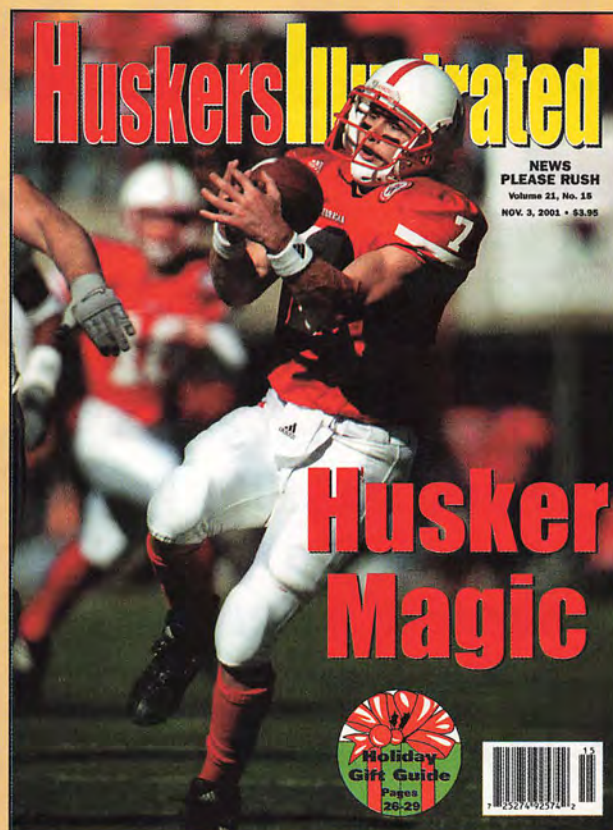
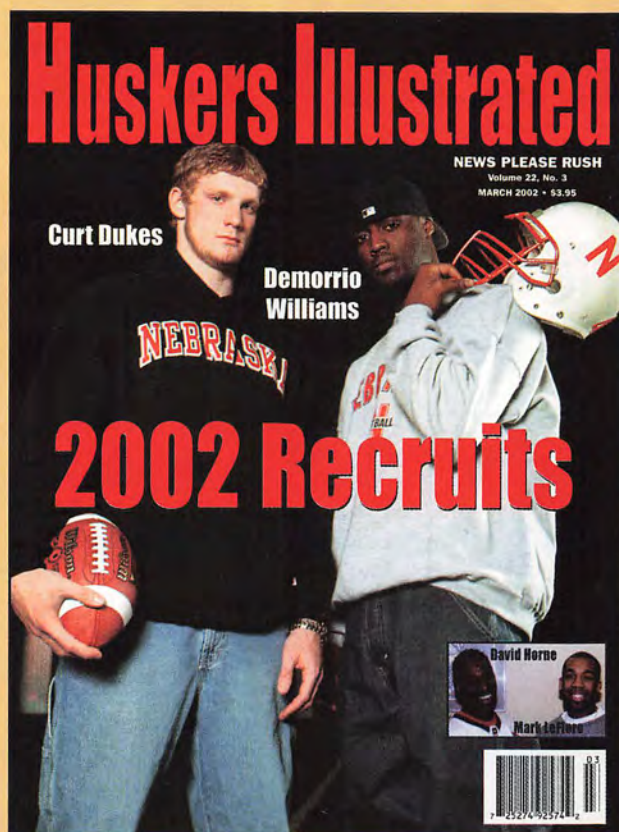


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. . . All The Time

Top Linemen Like Huskers

Nebraska looks to add depth across the offensive front in 2003 class

By Doug Horwich

The offensive line positions receive a great deal of attention from the Husker staff in every recruiting season, and 2002 is no exception.

Big, athletic linemen are continually in high demand, and the Huskers annually secure visits from many of the nation's top prospects. Although Nebraska has done a good job of bringing in some very talented young linemen recently, depth is still a bit lacking across the line.

The 2003 recruiting class figures to be the largest in some time, with the potential for a full allotment of 25 scholarships this year. At least five of



Nebraska ranks among the favorites of Ian-Yates Cunningham, one of the top linemen in Texas.

those scholarships are expected to be given to offensive linemen, distributed among offensive tackle, offensive guard and center.

One of the first offensive linemen identified by the Husker staff as a top target is Brett Byford (6-foot-4, 290 pounds, 5.0 40-yard dash) from Hartselle, Ala. Byford recently visited Nebraska with his father on an

unofficial visit and came away very impressed.

"It was incredible," Byford said. "The facilities were nice, but the biggest thing was the coaches — I loved them. I liked Lincoln a lot, too. It wasn't too big, and I like that. My dad liked everything a lot, too."

Quarterbacks coach Turner Gill is recruiting Byford for Nebraska, and the two have developed a good rapport. Byford has also bonded with receivers coach Ron Brown.

"My two favorite coaches in the recruiting process are Coach Turner Gill and Coach Ron Brown of Nebraska," Byford said. "Coach Brown — he is a man of God. I fell in love with him. He was awesome. I even bought a book about him. I've been bragging all week about him at my church. He is definitely tight. Coach Gill is great, too — he is handling my recruitment."

One element about Nebraska that appeals to Byford is its dedication to the running game.

"We run the ball — that's basically all we do," Byford said. "We run a lot straight up the gut, as well as some option. It would be great to play for a school that runs the football a lot, although I'm a pretty decent pass blocker as well. Some say that I have pretty good footwork. I guess you could say I'm pretty good at pulling and getting out and running. I love to run block. I kind of like being the aggressor."

In addition to Nebraska, Byford has received offers from Southern Mississippi, South Carolina, Vanderbilt, Clemson, Oklahoma, Memphis and Georgia Tech. He's

Nebraska Commitments for 2003

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Greg Austin	Cypress, Texas	6-2	275	OL
Andy Birkel	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-3	180	WR
Steve Craver	Hurst, Texas	6-2	195	DB
Josh Mueller	Columbus (Lakeview), Neb.	6-7	250	TE
*Trevor Neeman	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-3	225	TE/DE
*Kade Pittman	North Platte, Neb.	6-0	190	RB/DB
Bo Ruud	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-3	210	LB
Brandon Teamer	Omaha (Central), Neb.	6-5	256	DT

*scheduled to enter school in the fall of 2002 as part-time students and receive scholarships in January 2003.

also hearing regularly from Alabama, Tennessee, and Oklahoma State.

Byford may have a decision soon, and Nebraska appears to be in the driver's seat for his commitment.

"I'd like to get a decision made soon if possible," he said. "I'd like to make an early commit, but I have to make sure it's the right decision before I do. I could decide before the season, or it could be some time during the season."

Another top national prospect who's giving the Huskers a serious look is Ian-Yates Cunningham (6-5, 300, 5.0) from Hebron High School in Lewisville, Texas. Cunningham is one of the top linemen in Texas and is being recruited by many of the nation's top programs.

Despite a current offer list that includes more than 20 schools, Cunningham has already identified his favorites.

"My top four favorites would be Virginia, Nebraska, Notre Dame and Georgia Tech," he said. "In the next tier of favorites, I would have Michigan and Florida."

Cunningham did have substantial interest in home-state Texas A&M, and was named the top offensive lineman at its camp. However, the Aggies are in a scholarship crunch and are not able to offer him as a result.

Cunningham is a big and athletic prospect who excels at both pass blocking and run blocking.

"My technique and quickness are probably my best assets," he said. "I still have room to grow, too. I'm probably best at pass blocking right now, but I'm also a solid run blocker. I want to improve in both phases so that I can be the best at both."

"I like passing plays because you are one-on-one with the guy, and you can show off your quickness and strength," he said. "I also love running plays — like when I get to sweep out and block a defensive back or outside linebacker. Those are probably my best plays."

Despite excelling as a defensive tackle for Hebron, where he registered 38 tackles, two sacks, two forced fumbles and 12 tackles-for-loss last season, Cunningham is primarily being recruited for his offensive skills. "Some schools like me at

Huskers Locking Up Top In-State Players

By Rick Shaw

The Nebraska coaching staff is wasting no time in securing oral commitments from the state of Nebraska's top high school football prospects for 2002.

Josh Mueller, arguably the state's highest rated prospect, committed to Husker coaches back in November. The 6-foot-7, 250-pound tight end/defensive end prospect, from Lakeview High School in Columbus, has been lauded as being one of the most athletic big men in the country. Mueller, currently ranked as the No. 10 tight end prospect in America by Rivals.com, played tailback in 2001 but will concentrate on tight end this season.

The state's No. 2 rated prospect, Bo Ruud, of Southeast High School in Lincoln, gave his commitment to Husker coaches before the start of his junior season. The 6-foot-3, 215-pound outside linebacker recruit turned heads at the Husker summer camp in June by posting an athletic performance score of over 2,400 points. Ruud, generally considered to be among the country's top 20 outside linebacker recruits, recorded one of the top five athletic performance scores ever posted by a Nebraska camper.

Brandon Teamer, a 6-5, 265-pound defensive end/defensive tackle recruit out of Central High in Omaha, made his pledge to Nebraska coaches in July. Teamer chose the home-state Huskers over offers from Colorado, Wisconsin, Notre Dame, Kansas, Iowa, and Iowa State. Generally regarded as the third ranked player in the state heading into 2002, Teamer was happy to make his college choice before the start of his senior season.

"I couldn't see myself going anywhere else," he said. "I saw myself at Nebraska. My family was very happy and backed me 100 percent with my decision. Coach (Frank) Solich was definitely happy . . . and happy for me, too. He was happy that I could get this decision out of the way and enjoy my senior football season and final year of high school."

Teamer, currently rated the No. 19 defensive tackle prospect by Rivals.com, raised a few eyebrows at Nebraska's summer camp when he scored 2,146 point in athletic performance testing. His 5.1-second electronic time in the 40-yard dash and 1.69 second time in the 10-yard dash compare favorably to the scores posted by defensive linemen already in the Husker program.

The state's No. 4 prospect, split end Andy Birkel of Lincoln Southeast, gave his pledge to Husker coaches in late July. Regarded as one of the top sprinters in the state of Nebraska, the 6-3, 180-pound Birkel committed to Nebraska after taking a hard look at Kansas State.

"I chose Nebraska because of their winning tradition," Birkel said. "I mean, they've won nine games a season forever. I want to be a part of that. They have great academics and a great football team. Kansas State was impressive, but I just fit in at Nebraska better."

Although Nebraska hasn't extended offers to any other in-state blue-chippers, a couple of additional prospects could earn offers with outstanding senior seasons. Safety Xavier Oman of Beatrice, wide receiver E.J. Falkner and cornerback Chris LeFlore of Omaha Central and safety Caleb Berg of Heartland High in Henderson are just a few of the prospects that Husker coaches will be keeping an eye on as the 2002 season unfolds. ■

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both. I think my money is on offense though."

Cunningham could make an early decision, and the Huskers appear to be in his top two, along with Virginia. However, he has a large number of relatives in Virginia, and many of them are Cavalier fans. As a result, Virginia probably has a slight lead at this time.

Although the Husker staff doesn't appear to be actively pursuing any in-state offensive linemen this year, they courted a player only three hours from the Nebraska campus. But he spurned the Huskers for Big 12 rival Oklahoma.

Ryan Schuler (6-7, 275, 5.1) from Washington High School in Sioux Fall, S.D., is one of the top offensive tackle prospects in the country this year. Schuler attended Nebraska's football camp in June and impressed coaches around the nation with his outstanding athletic ability.

Schuler was not expected to make an early decision, and his commitment to the Sooners earlier this month caught many off guard, including his high school coach.

"Oklahoma wasn't really a factor for a long time," Washington Coach Kim Nelson told Rivals.com. "We just sent a tape down there and were hoping to get some reaction. Their line coach (Kevin Wilson) found out that he had some offers from Colorado, Iowa and Nebraska and liked the tape, so they offered."

As of late August, Nebraska had one commitment from an offensive lineman.

Greg Austin of Cypress (Texas) Cy-Fair High School caught the Husker coaches attention at the June 22-25 session of NU's summer camps. He received an offer and accepted.

"I was so shocked and excited," Austin said. "I wanted to commit right away. I mean, it's a once in a lifetime opportunity for any high school football player to play at Nebraska."

Austin, 6-2 and 275, said Nebraska wants him to play guard or center. He played tackle as a junior but will play guard this season.

"I wanted to get this decision out of the way before my senior season and get the pressure off of my chest," he said. ■

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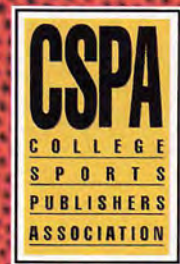
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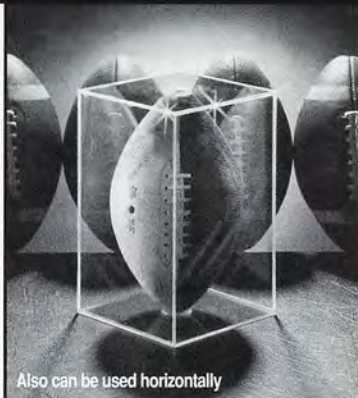
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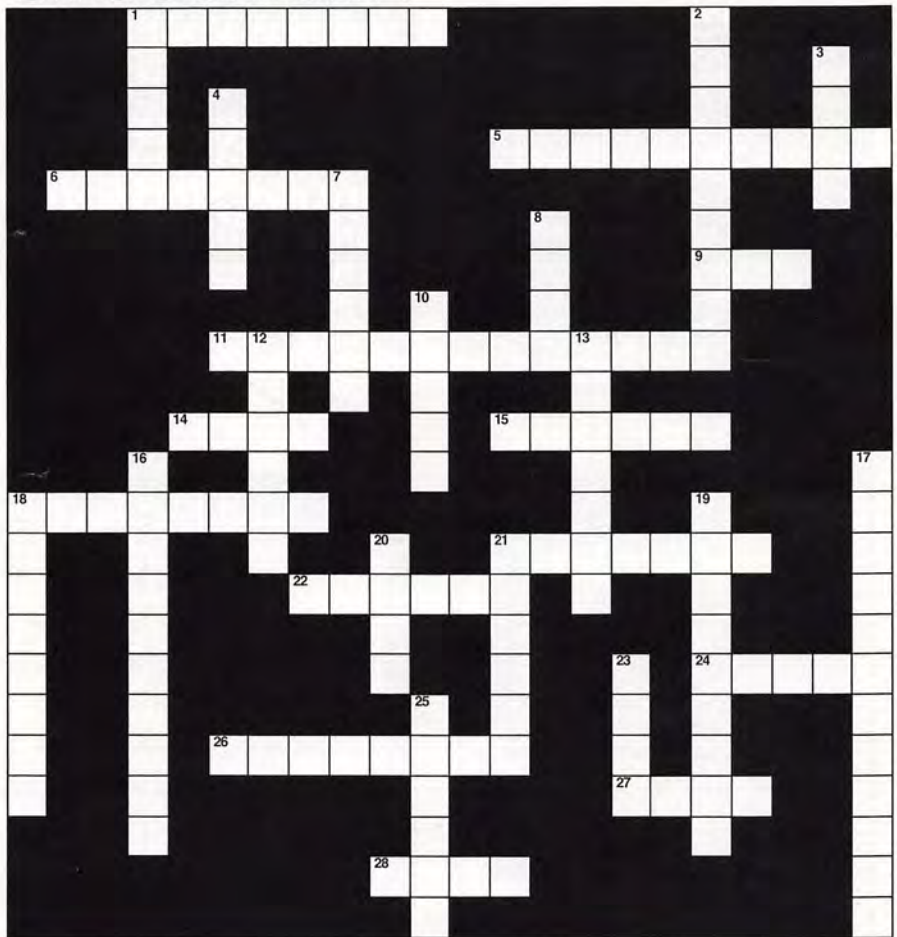
ACROSS

- 1 NU offensive lineman and captain
- 5 NU assistant in 30th year
- 6 Leading Big 12 rusher in 2002
- 9 Network for Penn State game
- 11 NU's 2003 opener
- 14 NU's quarterback coach
- 15 NU's No. 10 (defense)
- 18 NU's holder
- 21 NU assistant in 29th year
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- 24 NU's No. 7 (offense)
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- 28 NU's radio play-by-play announcer

DOWN

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- 2 NU's first road opponent
- 3 NU's indoor practice facility
- 4 NU's athletic director
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- 8 Eric Crouch's NFL team
- 10 NU's only 4-time all-conference selection
- 12 NU rush end and captain
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- 23 NU's linebacker coach
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Answers in Sept. 7 issue



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Just Being Himself

Lord shows maturity, resilience in first game as starting quarterback



Mike BABCOCK

THROUGH IT ALL, the build-up to his first collegiate start and the questions about replacing Eric Crouch, Jammal Lord maintained his poise, and understated sense of humor.

"Nothing changes with me," he said during a teleconference on the Tuesday before Nebraska's opener against Arizona State. "What you see is what you get."

What a Memorial Stadium crowd of 77,779 and a national television audience on the ESPN cable network saw, and what the Cornhusker offense got, was as good a debut as anyone could have imagined. Since last spring, Coach Frank Solich has said Lord could make things happen.

And he did, time and again eluding defenders when a pass play broke down and creating something out of nothing. He didn't escape every time, of course. But he did more often than not.

He finished with 103 yards rushing, on 17 carries, a total that surpassed those of Crouch, Scott Frost and Tommie Frazier in their first games as Nebraska's starting quarterback.

Lord performed so well that Solich fairly gushed, at least for him.

"He's going to be a little bit of a nightmare to control," said Solich.

Truth be told, he's probably going to be a lot of a nightmare for opposing defenses.

Arizona State defensive end Terrell Suggs wasn't about to argue the point. "He's a very big and athletic quarterback with a lot of good moves," Suggs said. "He had a great first start."

Lord, his right forearm wrapped in ice, constantly turned post-game questions away from himself and toward the team. The victory provided a "big boost in confidence for us," he said.

As for proving himself, "I don't try to prove anything to anybody."

Still, whether he was trying or not, he proved that the sophomore whose practice habits Solich questioned, unsolicited, at least twice last season is now a mature junior, who shed the green practice jersey he wore last spring and during preseason practice and shook off the hits he didn't avoid.

He was hit hard a couple of times, including once from the blindside, by Sun Devil defensive end Nick Johnson. Lord had turned up field on a scramble, and was past Johnson.

"Fun hurts," Lord said afterward. "I'm going to feel it tomorrow. It should be painful."

He also threw his first touchdown pass, a 9-yarder to split end Wilson Thomas, whom the Arizona State defense neglected to pick up as he ran into the south end zone.

Lord couldn't see the catch because he was hit as he released the ball.

"I just heard the band play," he said.

Though most who watched him probably would have disagreed, "I wasn't in the zone," Lord said in response to a reporter's question. "Our offensive line was moving them around a bit."

And a little bit of movement in front of him was all he needed to find a seam.

He also credited Nebraska's special teams for what he was able to accomplish. Two blocked punts and four sacks contributed to "a short field to work with," he said.

Given Arizona State's movement up front on defense, "it wasn't easy," said Solich. "Jammal handled the ball a great deal." But his handling of it was out of necessity, not poor judgment.

As a result of following Crouch, "probably no college athlete in the country was under more pressure," Solich said of Lord. But "he played as I hoped, as I expected."

"He made big plays for us time and time again. It is fortunate to have very tough, very physical quarterbacks in our system. He has proven to be one of those kinds of quarterbacks."

"Dropping back to pass, when he didn't like things, he just took off and made some big plays, and got hit a great deal on the passing game on some drop back passes."

But you can't keep a good man down, as Lord's resilience illustrated.

Considering the pressure, and everything else surrounding the opener, "I don't know that he could have stepped in and done any better than what he did," said Solich.

He added that he was "real proud" of what Lord did.

Lord admitted the adrenaline was flowing when he took the field, wearing the Cornhuskers' new uniforms. "I was pumped," he said. "I was pumped since I can't remember when, a long time."

Pressed by reporters on Tuesday, Lord admitted he had some goals.

"But I can't tell you guys," he said with a smile. "That's my goal."

Clearly, winning is a goal. "It's a win. I'm happy. We've got to move on," he said.

"This is one game. It's a building block."

His words conveyed a maturity missing a year ago. And it appears he's going to be just fine. ■



Jammal Lord had played sparingly in his first two seasons.

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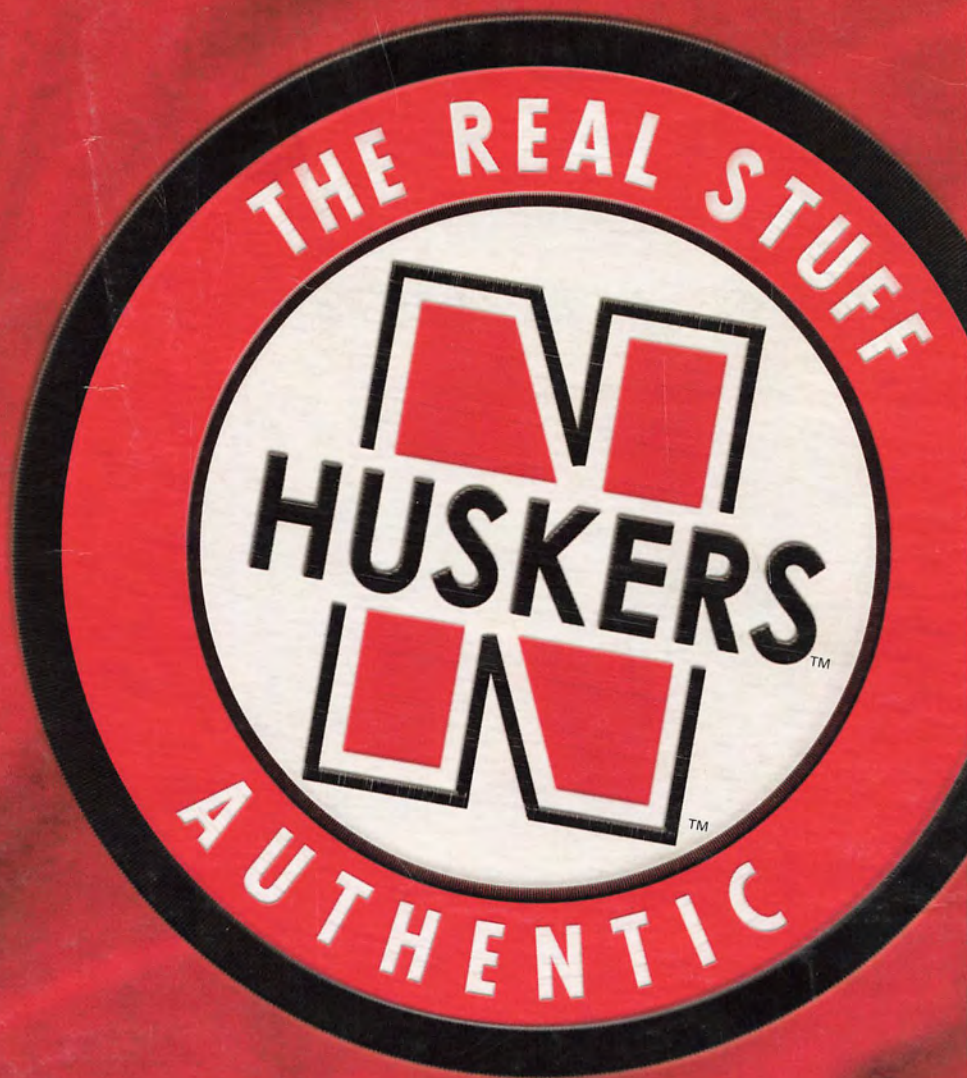
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